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Factors Affecting Social Workers' Political Participation: Resources, Professional Associations and Perceived Efficacy

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Factors Affecting Social Workers' Political Participation: Resources, Professional Associations and Perceived Efficacy

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL WORKERS' POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: RESOURCES, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND PERCEIVED EFFICACY

By David Henry Hamilton, Ph.D.

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Research has indicated that social workers are more politically active than the general public (Wolk, 1981; Parker and Sherraden, 1991), but their effectiveness has been questioned (Mathews, 1982). There are differences among social workers, but explanations of differences between "very active" and "inactive" have relied primarily on practice setting or method. However, research in political science has shown that income, education, involvement in associations, and perceived political efficacy, are significant predictors of who does not participate (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

Five hundred certified social workers were surveyed regarding how often they engaged in political activities (e.g., voting and campaigning) between 1995 and 1997; 242 surveys were returned. Whereas 92 percent of respondents voted in 1996, fewer than 1 in 5 met with government officials or worked in a political campaign; only 3 percent testified before a legislative body. Information on each respondent's performance of specific political tasks was used to create a Political Participation Score (PPS). Scores range from 0 through 11, with higher scores indicating greater political activity. Six percent of respondents were "inactive" (3 or less), 88 percent were "active" (4 through 7), and 6 percent were "very active" (9 or more).

The PPS was the dependent variable in ordinary least squares regression analysis, used to estimate the effect of political socialization, resources, perceived political efficacy, and involvement with professional associations on certified social workers' political activity. The significant predictors ($p \leq .05$) were political efficacy ($b=.237$), recruitment to action by a social work association ($b=2.34$), interest in public affairs ($b=.210$) and activity in NASW ($b=.165$). Income and education were not significant predictors of the respondents' participation.

The significant role of political efficacy suggests that strategies to increase social workers' perceived efficacy could increase their political activity. Greater performance of high-cost activities (e.g., testifying or meeting with government officials) could increase

social workers' input into the development of social policy. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1978) is utilized to identify strategies for use by social work educators and professional associations to increase social workers' perceived efficacy and, therefore, the performance of higher-cost political acts.

Chapter 1
Introduction

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In November 1994, the Republican party gained control of the U.S. House and Senate and began a dramatic rollback of social programs, including Medicaid, Medicare, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and restrictions on services to immigrants (both legal and illegal). Although Republican proposals to block grant all social and human services were defeated, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 was signed into law on August 22, 1996, by President Clinton. This welfare "reform" legislation enacted a 5-year limit on receipt of benefits; terminated services to legal immigrants; and, restricted eligibility for supplemental security income (SSI) (NASW, 1996). Although the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and others opposed the welfare reform legislation, their efforts only resulted in vague promises to re-examine the law in a second Clinton term.

Political action is a skill that should be utilized by all social work practitioners; however, some have treated political action solely as a function of macro practice, rather than all social work practitioners (Figueira-McDonough, 1993; Miller, 1987; Salcido, 1984). Jansson (1990) argued that policy activities are a unifying theme for social work, to be performed by all social workers, regardless of specialization. The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers, the International Federation of Social

Workers, and the National Federation of Societies for Clinical Social Work state that social workers should act to influence social policy development (IFSW, 1995; NASW, 1995; NFSCSW, 1987). The curricula statements of the Council on Social Work Education, which accredits bachelor and master level social work programs through its Commission of Accreditation, require that programs include content on the development and analysis of social policy and the processes used to influence policy (CSWE, 1995).

Political action has often been viewed by social workers as "needed to protect and enhance the lives of people" (Weismiller & Rome, 1995, p. 2305). Nichols-Casebolt and McClure (1989) noted that just as "practitioners must understand the effect of policy, policymakers must be attuned to the social and psychological effects of policies" (p. 79). Social workers have been encouraged to engage in political action by public officials (Cohen, 1966; Ribicoff, 1962; Thursz, 1962) and by their colleagues (Ginsberg, 1984; Heffernan, 1962; Minahan, 1981; Wagner, 1989). Social workers may not have followed through on these calls to action, since Weiner (1964) noted that "exhortations tend to produce guilt, but little action" (p. 106).

Social workers have engaged in advocacy on behalf of individual clients and populations of vulnerable persons (Specht & Courtney, 1994; Rothman, 1978; Haynes & Mickelson, 1986; Trattner, 1994; Jansson, 1995) and on behalf of the social work profession (Hanks & Mahaffey, 1982; Lenihan, 1980). In order to influence social policy, social workers, like other interest groups, must engage in political action. Political participation encompasses a range of activities, including voting, campaigning, making

political contributions, and contacting elected officials (Verba & Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Woodward & Roper, 1950). Previous studies have indicated that social workers are more politically active than the general public (Haynes & Mickelson, 1986; Matthews, 1983; NASW, 1995; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Reeser & Epstein, 1990; Wolk, 1981). However, the majority of voting-age Americans do little more than vote, neglecting higher cost activities such as campaign activity and contacting officials (Miller & Traugott, 1989; Verba & Nie, 1972; Woodward & Roper, 1950).

Low rates of political participation are not a recent development; fewer than 5% of Americans performed multiple political acts in the 1960s, a period perceived as politically active due to civil unrest (Milbrath, 1965). There are many factors which explain political participation, with education the strongest (Guth & Green, 1989). However, increases in the average years Americans' education since 1965 have not yielded a corresponding increase in political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Explaining political participation may be more complicated than considering only education and income, as in the so-called socioeconomic model (Verba & Nie, 1972).

It is not surprising that social workers, on average, perform more political acts than the typical American. Social workers' political participation dates from the days of Jane Addams (Popple, 1995). It appears, however, that the amount of participation varies in response to the political and social environment. Hopps and Collins (1995) charged that social workers focused on changing the individual in conservative decades (e.g., 1920s, 1950s, and 1980s) and changing society in progressive decades (e.g., 1900s, 1930s, and

1960s). While the argument of Hopps and Collins reflects the profession's struggle between "cause and function," political participation is a component of both direct and indirect social work practice.

Political participation is one type of social work advocacy and should be differentiated from general advocacy on behalf of clients. Ezell (1991) noted the difference between "case advocacy" on behalf of an identified client and "class advocacy," including political participation, benefiting a group of people. Ezell asked respondents to indicate those interventions, including advocacy and political participation, taken in response to client needs. The political participation items were similar to items included in the Political Activity Index (Wolk, 1981; Woodward & Roper, 1950).

Social workers' political participation may increase in response to attempts to eliminate or curtail social programs (Cloward, 1990; Pagliacci & Gummer, 1988). Haynes and Mickelson (1986) alleged that social workers were unprepared to respond politically when President Ronald Reagan proposed to transfer responsibility for social programs to the states. Yet, it was reported that social workers engaged in more political acts in 1988, after Reagan, than in 1980 (Ezell, 1993), which would support Cloward's thesis that social workers are more politically active when social programs are threatened. If this is true, in 1997, social workers' political participation should be at a high level, in response to proposed cuts in welfare and social programs.

During the period 1980 to 1995, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) increased the government relations staff from one position to six lobbyists and support staff; additionally, NASW state chapters added legislative staff (Weismiller & Rome, 1995). The Association's increased legislative advocacy, including membership recruitment, may explain the increase in political participation of NASW members (Ezell, 1993).

At the same time NASW was increasing legislative action, the Association's political action committee increased available funds and political contributions. Between 1985 and 1988, annual member contributions to NASW Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE) climbed from $32,374 to $84,182. In 1989, NASW instituted a negative check-off for member renewals, earmarking a $5 increase in each members' dues for PACE, unless the member chose not to contribute. Annual PACE revenues increased from $84,182 in 1989 to $405,745 in 1993 (Northeast Regional PACE training, May 1994). In March 1996, the Association doubled the check-off amount; subsequent rebate checks to chapters have increased by 35% (Weismiller, 1996, personal communication). The additional funds increase the Association's ability to engage in political action.

Determining the amount and type of social workers' political participation is essential to developing strategies to increase their participation. If there is a cycle of participation, it is not known if social workers are currently at a high point or low point in political participation. If social workers engage in political participation in response to cuts in social programs, cuts proposed by the federal and New York government should

spur certified social workers to a "high" point of participation. The current study surveyed a sample of certified social workers in New York regarding political participation to capture a "snapshot" of the amount and type of social workers' participation. As with other populations, including the general public and professions, there are expected to be differences in the amount and type of political participation among respondents. Information on participation is necessary to develop a model to explain differences in social workers' political participation.

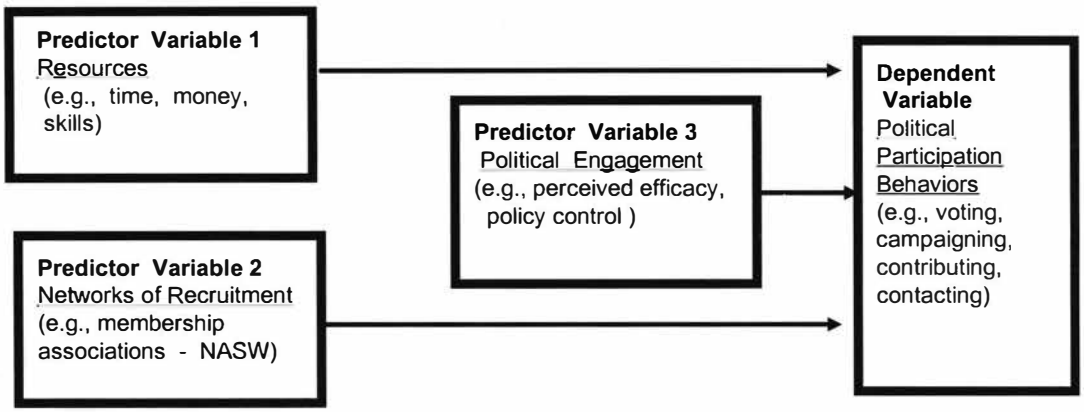
Explanations for differences in the political participation of the general population have focused on two factors: 1) resources, as described by socioeconomic factors (e.g., money, time, and skills) and, 2) political engagement (e.g., perceived political efficacy, policy control, and interest in politics) (Dreyer & Rosenbaum, 1970; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). A third factor, networks of recruitment, may facilitate individuals' political participation with requests for political activity from colleagues, neighbors, or family (Baumgartner & Walker, 1990; Knoke, 1982).

Earlier studies reported that social workers are more frequent political participants than the general population (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981). These studies did not, however, suggest interventions to increase social workers' political participation.

The current study presents a model, based on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), to explore whether differences in social workers' political participation are explained by sense of political engagement. Beyond this, the results should guide the

development of educational and professional interventions to increase social workers' political participation (Figure 1-1). In this study, resources (predictor 1) (e.g., income, free time and social work method), networks of recruitment (predictor 2) (e.g., membership in organizations), and political engagement (predictor 3) (e.g., perceived political efficacy and policy control) are predictors of social workers' political participation. Resources, networks of recruitment, and political engagement are inter-related (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Figure 1-1. Differences in social workers' political participation may be explained by differences in resources, networks of recruitment, and political engagement.



Although resources and networks of engagement are significant predictors of political participation, membership in professional associations and social work education alone could not increase social workers' resources (e.g., income, years of education,

age), although they could be instrumental in developing political participation skills and the opportunity for exercising those skills. Skill acquisition is meaningless unless individuals have the time and opportunity to participate, and believe that their participation will make a difference.

Interventions by schools and associations could expand networks of recruitment, by recruiting individuals to membership in professional social work associations, but this intervention would still be limited by individuals' financial ability to pay dues. Social learning theory may guide the development of interventions to increase social workers' perceived political engagement. Social learning theory applied to political participation would predict that individuals increase their political participation based on the perceived mastery of skills (sense of efficacy) and expectation of successful outcomes (policy control).

In the current study, information was collected about factors related to the three predictor variables. However, it is suggested that political engagement (predictor 3) is the strongest predictor of political participation (dependent variable). Political engagement results from the socialization process (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). It has been suggested that political socialization develops during elementary school and does not change dramatically in adulthood (Jennings & Niemi, 1968). Political socialization is a life-long process and the amount and type of participation may increase or decrease, depending on other factors, such as available time, perceived efficacy, and access to information. Differences in political socialization require the introduction of several

factors to estimate the respondents' political socialization at age 16. This allows the opportunity to determine whether social workers select the profession because of the opportunity for political action or if they have been socialized for participation through education or professional activities.

Social workers' political participation (dependent variable) is determined by creating an aggregate score, based on the performance of specific political acts (e.g., voting, contributing money, campaigning, etc.), included in the Citizen Participation Study (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The score allows a comparison of social workers' political participation in 1997, with the results of the nationwide Citizen Participation Survey and with earlier studies of social workers' political participation (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981).

The results of this study have implications for social work education and professional social work associations in their efforts to increase social workers' political participation. The model would suggest that social workers with greater political participation scores would perceive themselves as successfully engaged with politics and, therefore, continue to participate. Earlier studies have indicated that not all social workers are political participants (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991). Interventions which increase social workers' sense of political engagement may increase the political participation of social workers, regardless of their earlier political socialization.

BACKGROUND

The following section provides a brief overview of: 1) political participation in the United States; 2) measurement of political participation; 3) explanations of political participation; 4) shortcomings in models of political participation; and, 5) social learning theory as it would apply to political participation. Further details on each of these is included in Chapter 2.

Political Participation in the U.S. The American political system is pluralistic, in that many interests are represented in the policy-making process. Dahl noted that this decentralized approach "disperses power, influence, authority, and control away from any single center toward a variety of individuals, groups, associations, and organizations" (1989, p. 252).

The decisions of government are shaped by the input of interested individuals and groups. One measure of the effectiveness of any individual or group is whether the outcome is changed by their participation (Dahl, 1956; Verba & Nie, 1972). Social workers and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) were judged by state and congressional legislators in Michigan to have little influence on the political process (Mathews, 1982). However, Mathews did not discuss whether policy outcomes at the state or federal levels were affected by the political participation of members of the Michigan NASW chapter.

Political participation describes attempts by individuals and groups to "influence the structure of government, the selection of government authorities, or the policies of

government" (Conway, 1991, p. 3). This definition would include voting; financial contributions; attendance at political meetings or rallies; working for a candidate or party by canvassing, phone banking, fundraising, speech writing, poll-watching, leafleting, voter registration, or other activities; discussing political issues with family, friends or colleagues; contacting legislators by writing letters, sending telegrams, making telephone calls, or making legislative visits; attending legislative conferences or legislative days; and, giving testimony before a legislative body.

In common usage, the term "special interest group" conjures images of large membership organizations, such as the American Association of Retired Persons, or corporations, such as Mobil Oil, which utilize grassroots members or high-priced lobbyists, "vying against one another for the prizes that are an out-growth of political activity" (Barbaro, 1978, p. 420). Professional social work associations meet the definition of "special interest group," that is, "members of a formal or informal association who have common interests, goals, concerns, or desires that often lead to purposeful and united action" (Barker, 1987, p. 81).

Special interests are not a recent development, but were discussed during the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. James Madison advocated for adoption of what would become the Constitution by projecting special interests as the protector of democracy. Madison predicted that "society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority" (Hamilton, 1948, p. 267).

Membership in voluntary associations, including service organizations and professional associations, is associated with increased political participation by individuals (Baumgartner & Walker, 1990; Knoke, 1982). Associations provide an opportunity for individuals to "acquire democratic norms, skills, and experiences" (Knoke, 1990, p. 1041), while recruiting and mobilizing members for political participation. Tocqueville noted that "an association unites the efforts of minds which have a tendency to diverge, in one single channel, and urges them vigorously towards one single end, which it points out" (p. 178, Chapter XII).

Measuring Political Participation. Although there are multiple acts which are included in definitions of political participation, each act involves a cost, in time, resources, or skills, necessary to perform that act. Milbrath (1965) arranged 14 activities in a hierarchy, with the most frequent behaviors at the base and those performed less frequently at the peak (Figure 1-2). A given item's ranking may vary from one election to the next, on the basis of a shift in the cost (time, effort or money) to be expended in fulfilling the task. The political acts performed by an individual--such as voting, contacting legislators, and contributing money--may be summed to achieve a cumulative political participation score. The Political Activity Index (PAI) was developed to differentiate "active" from "inactive" persons in political participation through: voting, holding membership in pressure groups, communicating with legislators, activity in a political party, and discussing politics (Woodward & Roper, 1950). Social workers' political participation exceeds that of the general public, as measured by the Political

Activity Index or similar scales (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981).

Figure 1-2. Milbrath arranged political acts in a hierarchy, ranging from least costly (1) to most costly (14).

14. Holding public or party office
13. Being a candidate for office
12. Soliciting political funds
11. Attending a caucus or a strategy meeting
10. Becoming an active member in a political party
9. Contributing time in a political campaign
8. Attending a political meeting or rally
7. Making a monetary contribution to a party or a candidate
6. Contacting a public official or a political leader
5. Wearing a button or putting a sticker on a car
4. Attempting to talk another into voting a certain way
3. Initiating a political discussion
2. Voting
1. Exposing oneself to political stimuli

Explaining Political Participation. Attempts to explain political participation have focused on socioeconomic status (SES), political engagement, networks of recruitment, or rewards accruing from participation. SES, political engagement, and networks of recruitment are variables in the socioeconomic status model of political participation. The relationship between the cost of participation and the rewards are variables in the rational choice theory.

Explanations of political participation have relied on items that are categorized as "social" and "psychological" (Dreyer & Rosenbaum, 1970; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). Social factors include ethnicity, gender, age, marital status, residential mobility,

years of education, socioeconomic status, number of children, age of youngest child, and public employment.

Psychological factors refer to an individual's engagement with the political process, not to the individual's emotional well-being. Psychological factors include political efficacy, locus of control, sense of civic duty, interest in and attention to political affairs, and strength and direction of political party identification. Psychological factors have been described as significant explanations of participation in earlier studies (Sigelman, Roedel, Jewell, & Baer, 1985; Verba & Nie, 1972).

Political efficacy describes an individual's perception of the political system's responsiveness. Persons with high external efficacy believe that "public officials are responsive to the interests of individuals like oneself" and "that government and political institutions help make them responsive" (Conway, 1991, p. 45). By contrast, internal efficacy is the "belief that one can understand politics and government" and "that political events can be influenced by the activities of individuals like oneself" (Conway, p. 43). Niemi, Craig, and Mattei (1991) noted that "of the many indicators of general political attitudes developed in the 1950s, sense of political efficacy is one of the most theoretically important and frequently used" (p. 1407).

Sufficient economic resources and a belief in one's effectiveness alone do not guarantee political participation (Wollman & Stouder, 1991). Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) suggested that people who possess the necessary resources and are politically engaged do not perform political acts because "no one asked." Requests for

participation are likely to come from networks, including neighbors, co-workers, or voluntary associations.

It has been suggested that individuals engage in political activities when the rewards outweigh the perceived cost of participation (Milbrath, 1965). Rosenstone and Hanson (1993) defined three types of rewards from political participation: material, purposive and solidary. Material rewards are tangible and are easily converted to money, such as a contract. Purposive rewards are intrinsic, such as the satisfaction of contributing to the process or a worthy cause. Solidary rewards are intangible and accrue from the social interaction. Solidary rewards may be of two types: collective rewards, which benefit all persons or class of persons, whether or not they participated; and, selective rewards, which benefit only those who participated.

Shortcomings of Political Participation Models. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) criticized the SES model and rational choice theory as inadequate explanations for political participation. The SES model relies on socioeconomic and psychological factors to predict who will be politically active, but it does not explain how or why the individual is active. Rational choice theory, on the other hand, lacks the ability to predict who will participate, suggesting that individuals make decisions to participate on the basis of self-interest and potential rewards. The "Civic Voluntarism Model," which predicts participation and the issues selected on the basis of resources, political engagement, and networks of recruitment, is a recent alternative model to the SES model and rational choice theory (Verba et al., 1995).

In the Civic Voluntarism Model, resources include attributes related to socioeconomic status, such as education, income, civic skills, and free time; political engagement includes an individual's interest in politics, political ideology, sense of efficacy, and political socialization. Networks of recruitment describes a range of methods by which individuals are asked to become politically active, including organizational memberships, requests from individuals, and church attendance.

The Civic Voluntarism Model was developed through the application of regression analysis to the results of a nationwide survey of political participation. A broad-based survey highlights significant differences in the resources and networks of recruitment of respondents. Social workers are a relatively homogeneous group, and in previous studies, variables such as resources and networks of recruitment have neither explained nor predicted political participation (Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981). This is discussed further in the following chapter.

The model tested in the current study focuses on political engagement as the primary variable to explain differences in social workers' political participation and to develop strategies and interventions to increase participation. The model is based on the application of social learning theory, which is explained briefly in the following section.

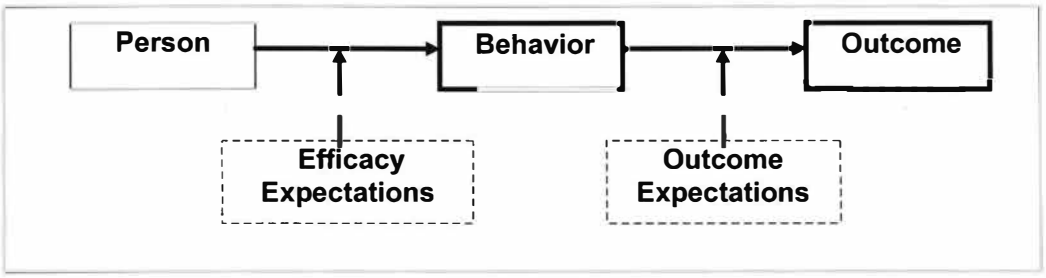
Social Learning Theory. Evidence has been offered to support the theory that political participation is cumulative (Dahl, 1961; Milbrath, 1965). Milbrath arrayed political acts on a hierarchy, from least costly to most costly (see Figure 1-2). Individuals who engage in one political act, such as contacting an official, are likely to engage in

additional acts. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) would support a prediction that political participation increases the individual's perceived political engagement, increasing the likelihood that the individual will engage in additional acts. Successful participation not only increases an individual's perception of the political system as responsive but it provides a sense of control over one's life (Leighley, 1991).

Bandura (1982) described social learning theory as the process by which "cognitive, behavioral and social skills are organized into integrated courses of action" (p. 122). Political participation, such as contacting legislators and delivering testimony, requires the development of political skills. The necessary communications skills, such as letter writing or public speaking, may be generalized from other education or life experiences. However, communication with powerful, elected officials could generate anxiety and avoidance behavior. Reasons for not participating include a perception that politics is too complicated, that the individual cannot make a difference, or an expressed fear of "getting in trouble" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Early applications of social learning theory included behavioral interventions to treat stress-provoking events or phobias, such as the fear of snakes. Bandura suggested that the mastery of skills increases an individual's perception of efficacy, making it more likely that the individual will act. Whether or not the individual will act is also affected by the individual's perception of the likelihood that personal action will result in the desired outcome. Social learning theory, and the role of self-perceived expectations of efficacy and outcome, is diagrammed in Figure 1-3.

Figure 1-3. The individual's expectations regarding mastery and outcomes affect the performance of targeted behaviors (Bandura, 1977, p. 193).



CURRENT STUDY

Although earlier research has indicated that social workers are more politically active than the general public, not all social workers are politically active. The socioeconomic status (SES) model suggests that the most powerful predictors of political participation by the general population are years of education and socioeconomic status (Conway, 1991; Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972). Parker and Sherraden (1991) suggested that the SES model would not differentiate among the political participation of social workers, who were perceived as similar on measures of education and socio-economic status. Explanations of differences in the political participation of social workers have included: population served (Wolk, 1981); practice method (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991); and, involvement in professional activities, such as attending conferences and presenting papers (Reeser, 1988a, 1988b, 1991).

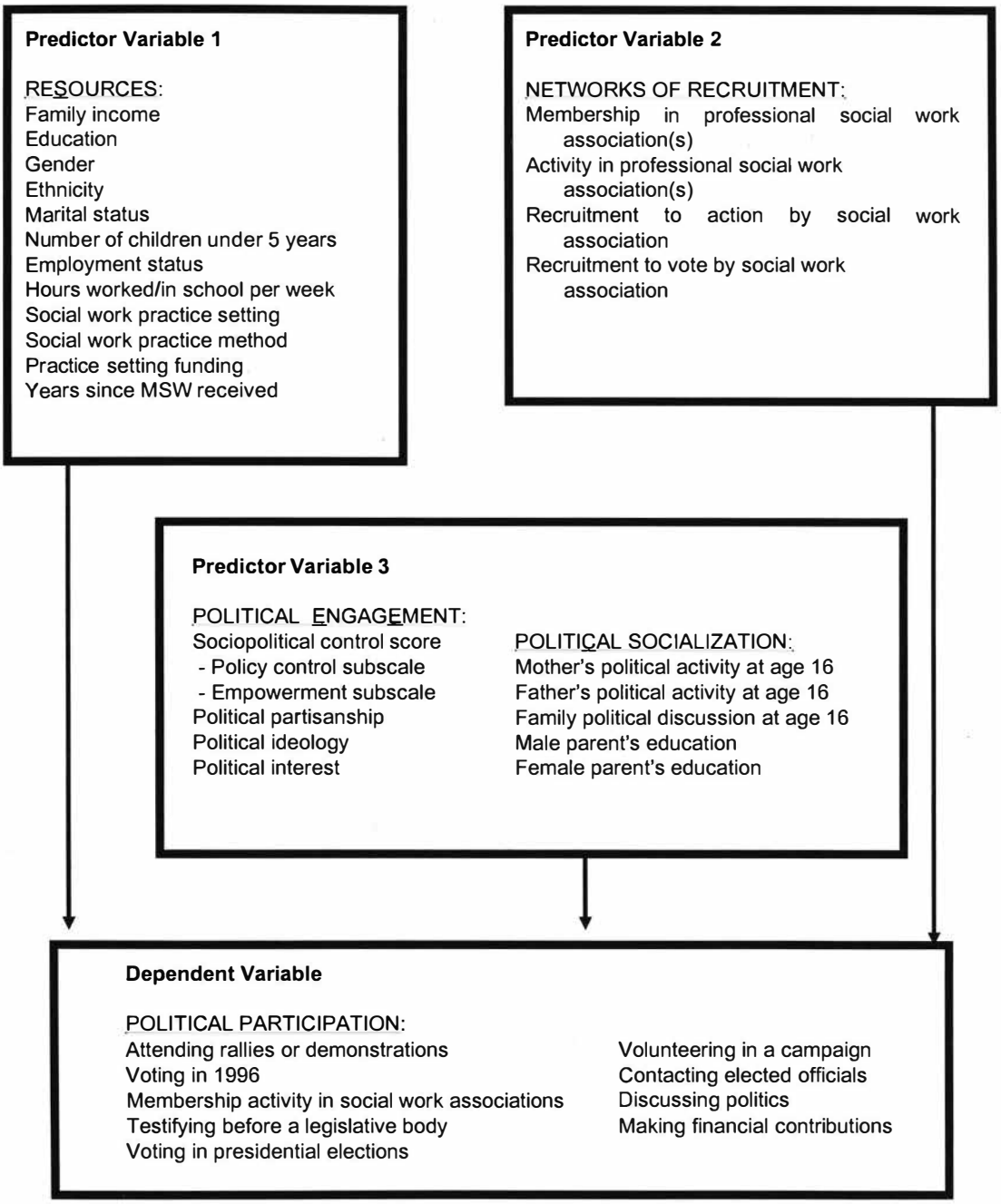
Research on political participation has supported a relationship between political engagement and political participation. Applying social learning theory to political

participation leads one to suggest that increasing social workers' political participation could increase their sense of political engagement. This, in turn, would increase the social workers' future political participation. None of the previous studies of social workers' political participation have explored the relationship between political engagement and participation. Political engagement may not only explain differences in social workers' political participation, but engagement may suggest interventions to increase political participation such as modeling behavior, simulations, and supervised political activity.

In order to test the model of political participation, it is necessary to determine the political participation of social workers. The study collected information from certified social workers on three predictor variables: 1) resources, 2) networks of recruitment, and 3) political engagement. These variables serve as predictors in testing the model of political participation (Figure 1-4). The items included in each variable (e.g., income, social work practice, membership in NASW) are chosen on the basis of the literature review. These items are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The dependent variable (political participation) is calculated as the cumulative score from the performance of specific political actions, such as voting, contributing money, and campaigning. These methods of political participation have been utilized in other studies of participation (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Wolk, 1981; Woodward & Roper, 1950). Ordinary least squares regression analysis determines the relative strength of the predictor variables (resources, networks of

Figure 1-4. Predictor variables for political participation include "social" and "psychological" factors.



recruitment and political engagement) in explaining differences in certified social workers' political participation. Forward entry of variables develops a parsimonious model, which identifies the strongest predictors which, in turn, affects the development of strategies and interventions to increase political participation.

The sample (N=500) was drawn from all certified social workers (CSW) in New York State. Eligibility for the CSW requires possession of the MSW degree and attaining an acceptable score on a standard examination. There is no requirement that an individual must be a CSW to practice social work. Certification, however, is required for vendorship, or eligibility for reimbursement under indemnity insurance policies. Although CSWs may provide a range of social work services, the connection to vendorship may result in a sample with a disproportionate number of CSWs engaging in direct, rather than indirect, practice.

The current study takes a "snapshot" of certified social workers' political participation and uses the baseline information to test a model for explaining differences in the political participation of professional social workers. The baseline information on political participation of certified social workers allows the development of several hypotheses regarding the amount and type of CSW participation. The current study is exploratory, but it also tests hypotheses regarding the possible role of political engagement in explaining differences in political participation of certified social workers.

If political engagement is a significant explanation of participation, this may suggest future interventions to increase certified social workers' sense of engagement and, therefore, participation. In particular, the study asked:

1. To what extent do social workers in the survey participate in the political process by voting, campaigning, contributing time or money to candidates, and contacting legislators?
2. Do differences among certified social workers on the predictor variable of political engagement explain differences in political participation?
3. Is the amount of political participation related to social workers' sense of political engagement?

The research questions and specific hypotheses are included in Chapter 3.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

This research has implications for social work education and practice, mainly through the identification of variables to predict the political participation of social workers. Engagement in the political process is the responsibility of all social workers, regardless of practice method, setting, specialty, or population served (Haynes & Mickelson, 1986; Netting, Kettner, & McMurtry, 1993).

Some within the profession have criticized social work when it expends political capital on behalf of the profession, rather than clients (Specht & Courtney, 1994). However, most social policies of concern to social workers affect both the profession and

its clients, such as third-party reimbursement for social work services; these policies are likely to be supported by social workers (Ewalt, 1994). Collecting detailed information on the subjects on which CSWs are politically active is beyond the scope of the current study; follow-up surveys with "active" and "very active" CSWs may collect information on this variable.

A greater criticism of the profession is the allegation that social workers, in order to increase their professional status, have abandoned political advocacy in favor of effective and professional neutrality (Reeser and Epstein, 1988a, 1988b, 1991). Mickelson (1995) stated "if social work doesn't value advocacy, it could lose its uniqueness" (p. 99). In commenting on the search for professional status, Weiner (1964) cautioned that abdicating "social action may be too high an admission price for integration and acceptance" (p. 108). If CSWs are not politically active, as determined by the current study, then it would require that professional associations and educators intervene to increase political participation by all social workers.

Dahl (1961) suggested that, rather than trying to explain why people are not interested, concerned and active in politics, "it is more important to explain why a few citizens are" (p. 279). In the same vein, understanding why social workers are politically active has implications for social work educators and for professional associations, such as NASW. Determining if social workers with resources and networks of recruitment increase their political participation in response to successful participation may help educators and professional associations determine how to increase the political

participation of these and other social workers. The strategies developed are applicable to the profession's efforts to elect candidates who support social programs which move society toward social justice by influencing the development of social legislation.

Chapter 2 presents information on studies of political participation by the general public and social workers. Identification of those factors which have discriminated between politically active and politically inactive individuals will be utilized in the development of items for inclusion in the instrument for measuring the political participation of certified social workers in New York. Ordinary least squares regression is used to identify significant predictors of certified social workers' political participation; these findings are discussed in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 presents strategies, based on social learning theory, and the author's professional experiences, which may increase overall political participation or the performance of targeted activities, e.g., contacting government officials or volunteering time on an election campaign, and suggest further areas for research.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews recent research into political participation. It is organized as follows: 1) political participation in democracy; 2) measuring political participation; 3) factors affecting participation (resources, networks of recruitment and political engagement); 4) models of political participation, including the Civic Voluntarism Model (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995); 5) political socialization; and, 6) social learning theory and its application to political participation.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN A DEMOCRACY

Representative democracy requires the active participation of citizens. In the early 19th century, Tocqueville traveled throughout the United States, observing the American political system. Tocqueville noted that:

> "the people appoint the legislative and the executive power. The people are therefore the real directing power; and although the form of government is representative, it is evident that the opinions, the prejudices, the interests, and even the passions of the people are hindered by no permanent obstacles from exercising a perpetual influence on the daily conduct of affairs" (1988, p. 173).

Individuals communicate their opinions, prejudices, interests, and passions in a number of ways, including voting, contacting elected officials, providing testimony, campaigning for issues or candidates, and contributing money. It is through "participation [that] the goals of society are set in a way that is assumed to maximize the allocation of

benefits in a society to match the needs of the populace" (Verba & Nie, 1972, p.4). If the most politically active individuals are those of higher socioeconomic status, social policies may not address the needs of society's most vulnerable populations. This would be especially true when tax cuts for upper income persons are offset by cuts in services to lower income individuals and families. There are reported differences in the attitudes on public policy between those who engage in political acts other than voting and the attitudes of non-participants (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

In discussing contact between legislators and constituents, Alexander Hamilton wrote that it should be expected that a candidate seeking the support of voters "should take care to inform himself of their dispositions and inclinations, and should be willing to allow them this proper degree of influence upon his conduct" (Hamilton, Madison, & Jay, 1948, p. 168). Two hundred years later, Greenawalt (1984) commented: "A large part of effective lobbying is a kind of threat that a legislator may lose electoral support if he takes a contrary position, and lobbying is as important as it is in this country because politics is decentralized and individual candidates must build their own base of support" (p. 160).

The individual's ability to participate in politics and to influence the government is affected by the individual's resources, networks of recruitment, and political engagement. Dahl (1989) reported that unequal distribution of resources (social standing; cash, credit and wealth; legality, popularity and control over jobs; and, control over sources of information) resulted in unequal participation in New Haven, Connecticut. The

differences among citizens in the resources they are able to devote to communicating with elected officials affect the credence and viability of their communication (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Studies of political participation in the United States and elsewhere have focused on socioeconomic factors to differentiate the politically active from the inactive (Verba & Nie, 1972; Woodward & Roper, 1950). The following sections review research in political participation, including that of social workers, to determine whether differences in resources can be offset by increased political engagement (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), resulting from interventions based on social learning theory. Increasing the participation of persons with fewer resources may increase the representativeness of messages delivered to elected officials.

MEASURING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Studies of political participation in the general population have examined a number of activities. The most widely reported behavior is voting. The percentage of voting age Americans who voted in the presidential election peaked at 62.8% in 1960, fell to 50.1% in 1988, and rose to 55.2% in 1992 (United States Census Bureau, 1993, Table 455, p. 284).

Voter turnout is only one measure of citizen involvement in the democratic process. Political participation has been described more broadly, and more accurately, as attempts by citizens to "influence the structure of government, the selection of government

authorities, or the policies of government" (Conway, 1991, p. 3). This definition would encompass activities such as: voting; making financial contributions; attending political meetings or rallies; working for a candidate or party by canvassing, phone banking, fundraising, speech writing, poll-watching, leafleting, voter registration, or other activities; discussing political issues with family, friends or colleagues; contacting legislators by writing letters, sending telegrams, making telephone calls, or legislative visits; attending legislative conferences or legislative days; or, giving testimony before a legislative body.

The American National Election Study (ANES) has been used since 1952 to estimate the number of persons who engage in a range of activities (Miller & Traugott, 1989). ANES collects information on political acts including voting, working for a party or candidate, attending political meetings or rallies, persuading others how to vote, contributing money to a candidate or party, and contacting legislators. Attendance at political meetings and persuading others how to vote declined from 1952 to 1986. Contributing money has fluctuated, peaking at 16% of respondents in 1976 and falling to 10% in 1986. Writing letters increased from 13% in 1964 to 28% in 1976, the last year this question was included in the survey (Miller & Traugott, 1989). None of these political acts are performed by the majority of respondents.

For more than 30 years, political science research has confirmed that the majority of Americans only participate by voting; fewer than 5% of the population engage in multiple acts. (Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Parker and Sherraden (1991) asked 300 members of NASW about voting, contributing money, attending rallies, and political work, which were defined as active behaviors. Passive behaviors, such as discussing issues, watching political programs on television or listening to them on radio, and reading about campaign issues, which are items in the ANES survey, were excluded from the instrument completed by social workers. Parker and Sherraden, using the ANES dataset as a reference point, reported that a higher percentage of social workers voted in the 1984, 1986, and 1988 elections compared to the general public. Social workers were also more likely to attend a political meeting or rally; make a financial contribution to a candidate or party; or campaign for a candidate or party.

Parker and Sherraden reported that 93.7% of social workers were registered voters and 92.8% voted in the 1988 election. The comparison of social workers to the general public on voting rates in the 1984 through 1988 elections is shown in Figure 2-1. Historically, fewer persons vote in mid-term elections compared to presidential elections, so the 1986 drop-off was expected. Based on the comparison with ANES data, Parker and Sherraden declared social workers more likely than the general public to vote.

Figure 2-1. Social workers voted more frequently than the general public in federal elections, 1984-1988 (Parker & Sherraden, 1991).

Election	Social workers voting	Public voting
1984 Presidential	90.5%	59.9%
1986 mid-term Congressional	76.6%	46.0%
1988 Presidential	92.8%	57.4%

Since voting is a low-cost activity, the researchers examined social workers' involvement in more costly activities. The 222 respondents engaged in 157 acts (each respondent could engage in one or more acts). The act performed most frequently was contributing money, reported by 26.1% of the sample. Other acts performed frequently were attending a political meeting or rally (18.5%) and working for a candidate (12.2%).

Parker and Sherraden created a combined score of political activity, defined as voting and engaging in at least one other activity. Persons were awarded one point for voting and each other activity performed, with a maximum possible score of 7. A score of 1 would indicate that voting was the only action in which the person engaged. The average social worker engaged in 1.71 acts. However, 60% of respondents only voted. Social workers with scores of 2 (17.6%) were determined to be "active," and those with scores of 3 or more (16.2%) were labeled "very active." Only 6% of the respondents were inactive, engaging in no acts (score of 0).

Compared to the general public, social workers are more likely to be politically active. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) presented respondents with a list of seven political activities, asking that respondents indicate which were performed during the 1988 election cycle. The average respondent engaged in 1.63 acts, similar to the average score for social workers. Applying the definitions for "very active," "active," and "inactive" used by Parker and Sherraden to the Verba et al., sample, 33% only voted (score of 1), 21% were "active" (score of 2), 25% were "very active" (score of 3 or more) and 21% were inactive (score of 0). Although more respondents were "active" or "very

active" compared to social workers, the number of "inactive" respondents in the general population was more than three times larger than among social workers.

Parker and Sherraden did not report how much money was donated by social workers, the number of meetings attended, nor the content of political messages delivered. Minimal performance of these acts does not increase social work's political or legislative influence. The actions examined by Parker and Sherraden, including voting, convey very little information to policymakers about the issues that concern social workers and their clients. Parker and Sherraden did not ask social workers about contacting legislators or letter-writing, two acts which are content-rich in terms of conveying precise information about issues. Electing candidates supportive of social work issues is important, but failing to follow up with legislators on pending legislation lessens the accomplishment of electing friendly legislators.

In addition to the ANES, political scientists have developed inventories or scales to collect information on the performance of particular political acts, especially those requiring more effort than voting. Woodward and Roper (1950) developed the Political Activity Index to gather information on specific acts and differentiate between the politically "active" and "inactive." The PAI asks about 5 activities: voting, holding membership in pressure groups, communicating with legislators, activity in a political party, and discussing politics. The PAI yields scores from 0 through 12, with higher scores indicating greater political participation. Woodward and Roper administered the

PAI to 8,000 persons nationwide, reporting that 73% of respondents were "inactive," scoring 3 or less on the PAI, and 27% were "active," scoring 4 or more.

The PAI has been modified and used to measure the political participation of social workers (Ezell, 1991, 1993, 1994; Wolk, 1981). The PAI provides an average score for each respondent, allowing comparisons among groups. Wolk mailed a modified PAI to 470 members of the Michigan chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Wolk deleted voting behavior, which he characterized as a low-level commitment of effort; exempted the federal income tax deduction for presidential campaign funds from questions regarding financial contributions; and, exempted membership in NASW from questions regarding membership in groups which take a stand on political issues. Wolk also deleted testifying on licensing or social work issues in the two questions that addressed political activities. Wolk awarded one point for each activity, except frequency of public discussions, which was scored zero for never, 1 for occasionally, and 2 for frequently. Possible scores on Wolk's instrument ranged from 0 to 8; he received 289 valid responses.

Wolk defined inactive social workers as those with scores of 2 or less; active social workers scored 3-5; and, very active social workers scored 6-8. Overall, 33.9% of respondents were inactive, 42.4% were active and 23.2% were very active. Comparing the average scores of social workers on the PAI with previous administrations by Woodward and Roper, Wolk determined that social workers were more politically active than other professionals and the general public.

Wolk examined differences in the political participation scores of social workers on the basis of job function and practice method. He reported that social workers in direct practice had lower participation scores than social workers in community organization, administration, or teaching (3.51 vs. 4.41, $p<.003$). Respondents could identify multiple fields of practice, so findings were limited to whether respondents were active or not active for each field. Social workers in public welfare were more politically active than those not in public welfare (4.46 vs. 3.63, $p<.03$); those in education were more active than those not in education (4.62 v. 3.64, $p<.03$); and, those in politics were more active than social workers not in politics (6.80 vs. 3.66, $p<.001$).

Wolk suggested that although social workers appeared to be more politically active than the general public, the profession played a minor role in shaping public policies. These findings were supported by Mathews (1982), who surveyed 29 Michigan legislators, including state representatives and senators, U.S. Senators, and members of Congress, to ascertain social workers' perceived political influence (defined as visibility, expertise, reputation, ideology, and money). Mathews reported that legislators lacked knowledge about social workers and their roles in society, describing social workers as without influence. Legislators rated NASW the least influential organization, behind the United Auto Workers, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Education Association, Michigan Business Association, and American Medical Association.

Both Wolk and Mathews suggested that social workers increase their political skills by developing personal relationships with legislators, writing letters on issues of concern,

and providing knowledgeable input to the development of public policy. Whittington (1990) described developing relationships with legislators as good social work practice, for direct practitioners as well as macropractitioners.

Ezell (1991) surveyed members of the NASW Washington chapter and graduates of the University of Washington School of Social Work, who did not belong to NASW, on advocacy, including political action. Surveys were returned by 353 persons, with NASW members slightly more likely to respond. Ezell utilized the same version of the Political Activity Index as Wolk (1981) to determine the political participation of social workers. Possible scores ranged from 0 to 8, with higher scores indicating greater political participation.

Ezell reported that 13% of respondents were inactive (scores of 2 or less on the PAI); 55.5% were active (3-5 on the PAI); and 31.4% were very active (scores of 6-8). In 1989, writing letters was the activity performed most frequently by social workers, but they also discussed political issues, belonged to political organizations other than NASW, and attended political meetings (Ezell, 1993). The most active social workers held advanced degrees, belonged to NASW, held macropractice jobs, and were African-American.

Ezell reported a significant difference ($p<.05$) in the average score for macropractitioners (4.96) compared to micropractitioners (4.35). Ezell attributed the difference in scores to macropractitioners' greater likelihood to belong to organizations other than NASW which take stands on public issues, to attend meetings at which

speeches are made, and to testify before legislative bodies. Micropractitioners were as likely as macropractitioners to discuss public issues with friends, to communicate with public officials, to work in campaigns, and to contribute money to parties or coalitions.

Ezell (1993) utilized the same data to compare social workers' political action after the Reagan presidency to before Reagan, as reported by Wolk (1981). Social workers' political participation, on average, increased significantly from 3.7 to 4.6 on the PAI. Ezell also noted that there were fewer low scores among the 1989 sample, inferring that social workers were more active after the Reagan presidency, compared to before (Figure 2-2). Ezell cautioned that 36.2% of social workers surveyed did not respond, and this may reflect a larger cadre of politically inactive social workers. In this and other studies of political participation, the politically inactive individual may be less likely to respond to surveys, therefore masking a larger population of inactive subjects.

Figure 2-2. Social workers were more active at the end of the Reagan presidency (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1993).

Political Participation Score	1981	1989
Inactive (0-2)	33.9%	14.5%
Active (3-5)	42.4%	55.5%
Very Active (6-8)	23.2%	30.2%

The preceding section indicated that social workers who belong to NASW are more active than the general public, and that social workers' political participation increases when social welfare programs are threatened with reduction or elimination. Regardless of the perceived threat, however, not all social workers are politically active. The next

section reviews research in political science which attempts to explain differences in participation among individuals.

FACTORS AFFECTING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Researchers have utilized a variety of strategies to identify those factors which are associated with individuals' political participation. In some cases, secondary analysis of a large data set (e.g., ANES) has been used to determine the relationship between particular factors and political acts, such as voting. In other cases, researchers have studied identified populations to determine the effect of one or more factor.

The leading factors of interest have been categorized as either socioeconomic or psychological (Dreyer & Rosenbaum, 1970; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). Socioeconomic factors include gender, education, income, occupation, home ownership, age, and number of children, among others. Socioeconomic factors tend to highlight available resources and skills which may be related to participation. Socioeconomic factors are often shared by a group of people or those in the same class. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) suggested that "resources," which include free time and civic skills, in addition to money and education, is a more comprehensive description than socioeconomic.

Networks of recruitment are the means by which individuals are brought into the political process. Studies have shown that membership in voluntary organizations, such as fraternal societies, unions, professional associations, and religious institutions,

increases the likelihood of political participation (Baumgartner & Walker, 1989; Knoke, 1982; Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995).

Studies of social workers' political participation have primarily sampled members of NASW (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981). Knoke (1982) cautioned that networks of recruitment, such as associations, tend to attract persons with similar backgrounds or experiences. Voluntary associations, in particular, utilize membership criteria to screen out persons with divergent education or occupational experiences. When samples are homogeneous, socioeconomic factors such as age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, partisanship, and family commitment must be included to "hold their effect constant to judge their importance relevant to other theoretically important factors" (Knoke, 1982, p. 173).

Psychological factors, often referred to as "political engagement," affect political participation. Key psychological factors include political efficacy, locus of control, sense of civic duty, and interest in political affairs. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) noted that psychological factors, such as efficacy or interest in politics, facilitate political participation, but that activity enhances efficacy and interest. They characterized these as "robust predictors, but trivial and possibly spurious explanations for political participation" (p. 271).

Verba, et al., addressed the difficulty in determining causality of psychological factors. It is likely that an inter-relationship exists between psychological factors, such as perceived efficacy and political participation. Individuals who participate and feel that

their participation is effective are more likely to participate in the future, yet it cannot be determined absolutely whether efficacy causes increased participation or participation causes increased sense of efficacy. Studies have not differentiated between participation and outcomes, although an individual may perceive herself as efficacious, yet the ultimate outcome is not the outcome sought by the individual.

Parker and Sherraden (1991) described social workers as homogeneous, suggesting that neither income nor education would discriminate differences in social workers' political participation. Social workers must have resources and should have networks which provide information and opportunity in order to participate in politics. However, political engagement is the only predictor susceptible to targeted interventions based on social learning theory.

The following sections present the factors which comprise the predictor variables: resources, networks of recruitment, and political engagement.

RESOURCES

Education. Education is the best predictor of political participation among the general population (Guth & Green, 1989). There is a strong, positive relationship between years of education and political participation, such that persons with more years of education are more politically active. Social workers with advanced degrees are more politically active (Ezell, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991). Vedlitz (1983) reported that greater levels of education are associated not only with higher political participation, but

with increased interest in politics, higher rates of political efficacy, and more liberal views, which are all included in the term "political engagement."

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) noted that "political activity is grounded in social structure and that structure plays a major role in the inequality of participation between lower and higher socioeconomic classes" (p. 513), with an intergenerational transfer of socioeconomic resources, primarily education and income. Parents' education has a large and significant effect on exposure to politics at home, respondents' education, and activity in high school events. Persons with more years of education start voting at a high rate (about 80%) and increase slightly over the life-span to 90%, whereas those with fewer years of education start voting at a lower rate (about 20%) and made large gains to 50% (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980).

Age. Age is correlated positively with political participation. There is a curvilinear relationship between age and participation, such that participation peaks in late adulthood and declines as the individual enters his/her later years and accompanying declines in health, mobility and income. The curvilinear relationship would be consistent with lifespan models of civic development and political participation (Strate, Parish, Elder, & Ford, 1989).

Dahl (1961) noted that the use of resources varies over the life cycle, peaking at middle age. Age is often used as a surrogate for life-cycle changes such as marital status, number and ages of children, number of years in a residence, or home ownership. Persons in their 20s often score lower on measures of political participation as they focus on

establishing a career or family. Persons in their 40s score higher on measures of political participation, especially as it relates to issues of employment, education, and home ownership. Finally, persons in their 60s score lower on measures of political participation as they disengage from work and social roles.

Wolk (1981) compared social workers political participation by gender, race, age, educational degree, years in practice, and salary. He found a statistically significant positive relationship between political activity and age. There were non-significant differences for gender and race, with women and blacks scoring higher.

Gender. At one time, males were more active in political affairs than women (Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972; Woodward & Roper, 1950). The differences between men and women have decreased, however (Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell, & Baer, 1985). Secret and Welch (1989) examined ANES datasets for the 1976, 1980, and 1984 presidential elections and determined that gender gaps had almost disappeared completely. Schlozman, Burns, Verba, and Donahue (1995) reported that more similarities, rather than differences, exist between men's and women's patterns of political participation.

Ethnicity. Whites engaged in more political acts than non-whites in the 1950s and 1960s (Woodward & Roper, 1955; Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972). Enactment of federal voting rights legislation and the civil rights movement resulted in increased participation by blacks (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). As with gender, differences in political participation have disappeared in recent years (Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell, &

Baer, 1985). Secret and Welch (1989) reported that differences in participation were found between blacks and whites on the basis of social class, rather than ethnicity. Verba, et al. (1995) reported that differences in the political participation of Latinos compared to blacks and whites may be related to language and citizenship, rather than ethnicity.

Home Ownership. Persons who own, rather than rent, their homes may have a stronger connection to the community in which they reside, increasing political participation. Kingston, Thompson, and Eichar (1984) found that home ownership fosters an inclination to vote, but found very limited support for the notion that home ownership makes individuals more conservative. Participation is also affected by the length of time a respondent has lived in the same community. Persons who have lived in a community for longer periods of time have stronger connections and, therefore, more investment in elections and policy.

Parker and Sherraden (1991) found that home ownership was the only significant social factor related to social workers' voting behavior. There was no association between voting and political affiliation, age, education, gender, race, income or geographic area of residence. However, both education ($r=.21$, $p<.01$) and home ownership ($r=.23$, $p<.01$) were significantly related to political participation by means other than voting.

Employment Status. Political participation is affected by available free time. Brady, Schlozman, and Verba (1995) reported that free time increases the likelihood of political participation. Free time was reduced by 6 hours or more a day when respondents hold a job, especially a full-time job; a working spouse reduced free time by 3 hours per

day as did having children--especially children of pre-school age--at home. Parker and Sherraden (1991) reported that 20.7% of their sample worked part-time and 11.7% was not employed, but they did not report any difference in social workers' voting or political participation on the basis of employment status.

Occupation. There are differences between the participation rates of white-collar and blue-collar workers. Government employees take more of an interest in political affairs and elections, probably because their employment often depends on who is in office (Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell, & Baer, 1985). In 1972, 83% of government employees voted in the presidential election, compared to 65% of other workers (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980).

Conversely, employment in government agencies, programs funded by the government, or not-for-profit agencies may decrease political participation due to federal or state Hatch Acts. The federal Hatch Act restricts the political action of government employees; New York's ethics law-- a "little Hatch Act"-- limits the political action of state employees. It has been suggested that a misunderstanding of the Hatch acts places unintended restrictions on social workers' political participation (Thompson, 1994).

In 1995, federal legislation which would restrict the political activity of not-for-profit agencies was rejected by both houses of Congress (NASW, 1995), yet the advocacy of not-for-profit agencies is still highlighted by conservative Republicans. The U.S. House of Representatives adopted rules in 1997 which require that, when representatives of not-for-profit agencies testify before the House, the testimony includes information

about federal funds received by the agency. Rules of this nature could limit the political participation of agency executive directors and key staff.

Income. Financial resources facilitate political participation (Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972; Woodward & Roper, 1950). Persons with higher incomes are more likely to vote in all elections, but especially presidential elections (Miller & Traugott, 1989; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). Persons with incomes greater than $75,000 per year performed an average of 3.2 political acts, whereas those with incomes less than $15,000 performed 1.3 acts (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Income is most noticeable in campaign contributions, since one must have money in order to contribute money.

Marital status. Persons who are married participate to a greater extent than non-married persons. One would expect that a domestic partnership would have a similar effect as marriage on political participation. Stukes and Jennings (1995) reported that married partners adjust their activity to become more like one another. Furthermore, marital transitions, such as divorce or loss of a spouse, tend to depress participation for a period of time, especially among younger respondents.

Children. The respondent's number of children and the age of those children are related to resources, especially time, available for political participation. The age distribution of children is important in estimating the effect of parental status on the levels of individual participation (Abowitz, 1990). Having children of school age, however, is strongly related to the participation of respondents in response to education issues, such as school financing or school boards (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995, p.

396). Issue-oriented activation, on topics such as education, results in greater political activity on the specific issue by persons who would be projected as less active on the basis of education, income, or other socioeconomic factors.

Civic Skills. Communication and organization capacities are essential to political participation in the general population but would not explain differences among social workers. Civic skills, acquired in the work place, voluntary associations or church, include writing a letter, attending meetings where decisions are made, planning or chairing a meeting, and giving a presentation or speech (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995). Most, if not all, of the civic skills are part of social work practice; therefore, one would expect all social workers to possess the necessary skills for political participation.

As noted above, research would indicate that, although education and income may be the strongest predictors of political participation, there are many other variables which may be referred to as "resources" for political participation. These variables are quantifiable, like years of education and annual income, but require more explanation and may be less robust predictors. The next section will address networks, which provide individuals with access to information and may be the source of requests for political participation.

NETWORKS OF RECRUITMENT

Few people engage in political action spontaneously; rather, the individuals most likely to engage in political action are "highly integrated into social organizations capable

of creating and sustaining the motivations, legitimization, and coordination necessary to carry out such collective actions" (Knoke, 1982, p. 171). Membership not only provides a source of information but also resources and colleagues to engage in further political participation.

Political participation is increased by contact with others. Kenny (1992) examined the effect of social context on individual political participation. Kenny reported that voting, displaying a yard sign or bumper sticker, and discussing issues with others are more likely to occur when respondents communicate with neighbors. Partisan activities, such as campaigning, contributing money, and attending a rally, were influenced most strongly by discussing politics with others. Abowitz (1990) noted that the social context of participation shapes the political behavior of the individual.

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) suggested that some individuals do not engage in political acts because "no one asked." Recruitment to political action can come through neighbors, employers, unions, churches, or other organizations. This section pays particular attention to the role of associations in recruiting and mobilizing political activists.

Association membership. Membership in voluntary associations, including service organizations and professional associations, is associated with increased political participation (Knoke, 1982). However, membership in associations alone is not sufficient to increase political participation. More than 60% of Americans 21 years and older belong to voluntary associations; 39% belong to two or more associations, and 40% are

active in at least one (Smith, 1991) and yet, voter turnout and political participation continue to decline.

Those who are inactive association members, or who only pay dues, are more likely than the general public to engage in political acts. A relationship between membership and contacting legislators and campaigning has been reported (Knoke, 1982). Holding an official position (e.g., president, treasurer, committee chair, or other designated role) in an organization and regularly attending meetings, as well as maintaining extensive relations within the organization, are positively related to political participation (Baumgartner & Walker, 1990; Knoke, 1982). Active members of voluntary associations are very likely to become involved in political participation.

Baumgartner and Walker (1990) stated that involvement in an association leads to political participation, but political participation is not a cause of association involvement. However, some individuals may join voluntary associations (e.g., Kiwanis, Elks, etc.) to increase their social contacts as a means to further political aspirations. Likewise, social workers may join professional associations to support or establish linkages for political participation on behalf of the profession or its clients.

Associations provide an opportunity for individuals to "acquire democratic norms, skills, and experiences" (Knoke, 1990, p. 1041). Interaction with colleagues provides a framework for comparison of one's beliefs and ideas with others. Knoke suggested that collegial networks were a factor not addressed in earlier studies, which reported that resources or political engagement were the leading factors influencing political

participation, suggesting that networks may actually provide a better explanation for participation.

Earlier studies of social workers' political participation (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Reeser & Epstein, 1987, 1991) primarily sampled members of the National Association of Social Workers. NASW is the largest professional social work association, with 160,000 members in 55 chapters in the U.S. and internationally. These studies did not explore the relationship between membership in NASW and political participation.

NASW is not the only association to which social workers may belong. Whereas NASW has been described as "centrist," smaller specialty social work associations are categorized as organizations of color or practice-related (Tourse, 1995; Pharis, 1987; Williams, 1985). Associations with racial, ethnic, or religious identity include: National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW), National Association of Puerto Rican/Hispanic Social Workers (NAPRHSW), National Indian Social Workers Association (NAISWA), and the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NAACSW).

Associations with specialized functions include the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), National Federation of Societies for Clinical Social Work (NFSCSW), Society for Social Work Administrators in Health Care (SSWAHC), American Association of Industrial Social Workers (AAISW), Association of Oncology

Social Workers (AOSW), Association of Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA), and National Network for Social Work Managers (NNSWM).

Social workers may also belong to associations which are organized by other professions, e.g., mental health counselors, or by specialty topic, e.g., American Public Health Association. Professional organizations (Gale, 1996) include the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (7,000 members), the American Counseling Association (60,000 members), and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (12,013 members). Specialty organizations include the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (130,000 members), the American Association on Mental Retardation (9,500 members), American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (22,000 members); and the Family Therapy Network (65,000 members).

Social workers may also belong to service organizations, unions, and organizations related to religion, ethnicity, or political issues such as abortion, gun control or taxpayers' rights. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) presented a list of 34 types of organizations, asking respondents to indicate those to which they belong.

Association Mobilization for Political Participation. Whereas social networks make effective, coordinated political action possible, they do not increase the probability of a person's political participation. However, recruitment through social contacts adds a social expectation that the individual will respond to the request for action (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Heunks (1991) proposed four methods by which associations or social networks activate individuals to perform direct political acts. In the first, socioeconomic

status fosters participation; in partisan-mobilization the political party is the primary source of mobilization; active membership in groups mobilizes individuals in the group-consciousness model. Finally, the personal-relevance of government model predicts that individuals will respond to programs that affect one's life directly.

Associations mobilize individual members to influence the law-making process by political participation. Schlozman and Tierney (1983) surveyed 175 interest groups in Washington, DC, on the amount and type of political activities in which they engaged. The leading political activities performed by interest groups were testifying (99%), contacting legislators (98%), informal contact (95%), presenting research data (92%), educating members regarding actions (92%), joining coalitions (91%), shaping regulations (89%), talking to media (86%), consulting with government officials (85%), and drafting legislation (85%).

Individual social workers may be mobilized to political participation through membership in NASW. Salcido and Seck (1992) surveyed NASW chapters regarding actions undertaken through the Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE) committee. Salcido and Seck found that more than 50% of responding chapters contacted legislators via letters, phone calls, and telegrams, and 42% of the chapters worked with coalitions. Additionally, 40% of the chapter PACEs attended rallies and 48% engaged in voter registration.

It is likely that NASW chapter activities are one conduit by which individual members engage in political acts. Chapter letter writing campaigns, legislative rallies,

telephone trees, and similar actions probably serve as a mechanism to engage members in political acts. As such, involvement with NASW serves as the motivating factor in political participation for members.

Reeser and Epstein (1987, 1991) noted that case workers, psychotherapists, group workers, and community organizers who participate in professional activities, such as conferences, and hold positions in NASW, are more likely to engage in social action. Political participation is greatest when social action is legitimated by the profession (Reeser, 1988a). However, Reeser found no relationship between professional involvement and support for conflict strategies or activist goals. Reeser (1988b) concluded that commitment to professional values of decorum and emotional and political neutrality is "conservatizing and therefore is not conducive to social action" (p. 56).

Reeser and Epstein (1990) noted that social workers are more likely to engage in political action sanctioned by the profession. Twenty-eight NASW chapters have a network or vehicle for involving members in state and federal legislative issues (NASW Government Relations survey of Chapter networks, 1993). Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) reported that 28% of persons affiliated with an organization had been asked to vote or engage in other political acts in the past year.

Social work students may have their first opportunity for political participation as part of the curriculum. Hull (1987) involved social work students in his campaign for local office. Hull reported that, after the campaign, students expressed more interest in

political events and were more willing to work in future campaigns. Voting participation of the students rose from 62% before the experience to 100% afterward. This could be seen as a validation of a social learning model to increase political participation.

The work place is another network of recruitment to political participation, although individuals are more likely to be mobilized by neighbors (Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995). Verba noted that 30% of workplace requests for action came from supervisors and that 70% of these requests were acted upon. Co-workers also provided many requests for action, and these were nearly as likely to be responded to as were requests from supervisors.

Pawlak and Flynn (1990) identified 19 political activities performed by 57 agency executive directors either "on the job" or "off the job." There were differences in the frequency of particular acts, depending on whether they were performed "on" or "off" the job. Nearly all executives wrote letters (95%) or talked with officials (90%) on the job; only 44% and 61%, respectively, completed the same tasks "off the job." Figure 2-3 includes other activities that were performed both "on" and "off" the job, with different levels of activity.

Figure 2-3. Methods of political participation are used differentially on-the-job and off-the-job. (Pawlak & Flynn, 1990).

Activity	On-job	Off-job
Used intermediaries	74	16
Attended public hearings	63	16
Served on task force/committee	54	16
Attended march or rally	25	28

Additional off-the-job activities performed by the executives included making financial contributions (81%), posting a yard/window sign (54%), and wearing a political pin/button (49%). In comparison to the "on-the-job" activities, the "off-the-job," actions are more passive in nature. When executives engaged in activities "off the job" the issues, which included day care and Medicaid, were not related to agency business. Most executives were concerned personally about schools, utility rates, and transportation.

Pawlak and Flynn did not discuss how the executive directors were recruited to action, but their actions may be in response to perceived opportunities or threats facing each agency. The discrepancy between activities performed "on" versus "off" the job raises questions about individuals' commitment to political participation when it is not a defined job task. Ezell (1991) reported that 68% of direct service providers engage in little or no job-related advocacy, compared to 45% of administrators. Ezell, who defined "advocacy" to include political participation, found that direct service providers were more likely to engage in case advocacy, related to an identified individual. On the other hand, administrators were more likely to engage in class advocacy, including political participation, on behalf of a group of people.

Reeser (1988a, 1988b, 1991) and Reeser and Epstein (1987, 1990) examined the relationship between increased professionalization of social workers and decreased social activism in the 1960s and the 1980s. Changes were assessed by comparing the responses of NASW members in 1984 to the response of other NASW members in 1968 regarding

social action and professionalism. The data reported in these studies also included different aspects of social work practice method as the variable of interest, including gender, specialization, and practice setting.

Reeser and Epstein differentiated between action on behalf of clients and action on behalf of the profession. This dichotomy would infer that client advocacy and professional advocacy are mutually exclusive. Berlin (1990) cautioned that this type of dichotomous thinking risks masking true differences. Ewalt (1994) noted that, in reality, social workers support legislation, such as vendorship, which simultaneously benefits clients and the profession. Although there were minor differences in the instruments used in the two administrations, Reeser and Epstein utilized 7 measures of activism. These included: commitment to activist goals for the profession, commitment to social change strategies for changing public welfare and mental health programs, a mental health conflict scale, inventories of institutionalized social action (e.g., lobbying) and professional social action (e.g., testifying on licensing), and non-institutionalized social action (e.g., rallies or demonstrations).

Reeser (1988a) reported that men had statistically significant higher mean ranks for institutionalized social actions such as lobbying ($p<.05$) and for professional social actions on issues such as licensing ($p<.001$). However, women were more likely than men to be involved in action support groups that discuss social issues, such as civil rights and womens' issues ($p<.05$). The differences in professional social action and social issues held when Reeser controlled for social work specialization, school, career status, practice

auspices, and years of experience, but the differences disappeared for institutionalized social action. Reeser suggested that social work is a "second-choice" career for men and, therefore, men are more likely to engage in political action to increase the professional status of social work.

Reeser (1988b) compared social workers in community organization, group work, case work, and private practice on their commitment to social activism and degree of professionalism. Reeser reported that, compared to case workers, community organizers were more likely to support activist goals, approve of conflict strategies on mental health and public welfare programs, and participate in institutional social action. Community organizers also were more likely than group workers to support activist goals and engage in institutional and professional social action. These findings were consistent with the predicted relationships.

Reeser compared social workers in private practice to community organizers, case workers and group workers and, as predicted, found that private practitioners are less likely to support activist goals ($p<.01$) and most likely to engage in professional social action ($p<.05$). Reeser was surprised to find that private practitioners also were most likely to engage in political social action ($p<.05$) but theorized that this may have been different if private practitioners had been compared to case workers, group workers, and community organizers as individual groups, rather than together.

Reeser and Epstein (1987) reported that from 1968 to 1984, social workers' support for societal change and activism fell from 53% to 37% ($p<.001$). Furthermore, in 1984,

only 23% of respondents favored devoting social work's resources to the needs of the poor, compared to 51% in 1968 ($p<.001$). They stated that social workers may prefer working with middle-class clients with whom success is more likely. Reeser and Epstein (1990) concluded that social work's rejection of social action on behalf of the poor occurred as the profession embraced an "ideology that stresses...social distance from low-income clients" (p. 125).

The preceding section cited research on the effect of networks, including professional social work associations, in facilitating political participation. Networks provide individuals with information about political issues and can establish mechanisms for participation, such as letter-writing campaigns, action alerts, and rallies. Although association membership and involvement in associations have been demonstrated to affect political participation in the general public, earlier studies of social workers' political participation have relied almost exclusively on samples drawn from membership in NASW.

There are differences in social workers' participation on the basis of job setting and type of practice (micropractice versus macropractice), although political participation is included in the codes of ethics of major professional social work associations. Artificial dichotomies between micro- and macro-practice and between client advocacy and professional advocacy may result in under-reporting or over-reporting of social workers' political participation.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Efficacy. Sense of political efficacy describes the individual's perceived mastery of political skills. External efficacy, or the perception of the responsiveness of government to citizen input, is often differentiated from internal efficacy, or the individual's perception of his or her own understanding of the political process (Conway, 1991). Niemi, Craig, and Mattei (1991) noted that sense of political efficacy is frequently used in measuring political participation. However, measures of political efficacy have not been included in studies of social workers' political participation.

Belief in one's ability to take action and to have an effect is critical to motivating citizens to challenge the status quo. Involving "citizens in social action requires overcoming the psychology of powerlessness" (O'Neill, Duffy, Emman, Blackmor, Goodwin, & Campbell, 1988, p. 1068). Once an individual participates and develops increased political confidence, he or she is more likely to participate in the future (Dahl, 1961). Dahl cautioned that a person with significant resources for political participation only has potential resources, unless he or she perceives the system as responsive and views himself or herself as able to effect political change.

Political efficacy is related to theories of political socialization which explain how an individual develops political skills and interests (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Craig and Maggioto (1982) noted that internal efficacy is a function of education, social status, one's level of political information, and attentiveness to issues.

Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell, and Baer (1985) reported that persons with higher internal efficacy were more likely to vote and engage in campaign activities in elections over a 10-year period. They noted that voting and performing campaign activities did not, however, influence respondents' sense of efficacy. In examining voting in national elections, they reported that external efficacy was a cause and an effect of voting and performing campaign activities.

Civic duty. Some individuals believe that it is their duty to vote, whether or not the vote is likely to affect the election outcome (Rosenstone & Hanson, 1993). Campbell (1964) defined civic duty as "the feeling that one ought to participate in the political process, regardless of whether such political activity is seen as worthwhile or efficacious" (p. 252). Campbell added that civic duty is related to education and to sense of efficacy and developed a four-item scale to measure sense of civic duty. Sense of civic duty is included in the ANES (Miller & Traugott, 1989) and in the sociopolitical control scale (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1989).

Strength of party affiliation. Strong identification with any party has been shown to boost participation (Leighley, 1991; Reece, Beatty, Dukes, 1983; Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell, & Baer, 1985). Party identification exerts considerable influence upon the electorates' evaluation of candidates, issues, and political behavior (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1970). In a non-scientific sampling of 40,000 NASW members, more than two-thirds of the 2,053 respondents indicated their affiliation with the Democratic party; 11% identified as Republicans and 11% as Independents (NASW, 1995).

Interest in political affairs. The individual's interest in and amount of attention paid to political affairs is related to the amount of political participation (Leighley, 1991; Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell, & Baer, 1985). The PAI and ANES ask whether respondents discuss political issues with family, friends, or colleagues or whether they follow political events on television or radio or in newspapers or magazines (Miller & Traugott, 1989; Woodward & Roper, 1950). Wolk (1981) and Ezell (1991, 1993) excluded the political interest questions from surveys of social workers' political participation, dismissing these as passive activities, choosing instead to focus on "active" participation, including campaigning or contributing money.

Locus of control. A key factor in political engagement is perception of policy control. An individual with self-perceived internal locus of control tends to credit the events that occur to the individual as the results of her/his actions. A person with perceived external control would envision a larger role of luck or chance in the outcomes (Rotter, 1966). Rotter developed a 23-item scale to differentiate internals from externals.

Numerous administrations of the Rotter scale to political activists have led to conflicting results (Levenson & Miller, 1976). In some cases, activists scored as internals; in other cases, activists reported more external control. Political locus of control was further defined by Levenson (1974), who developed a scale identifying internals, chance and powerful others. This revised instrument was intended to clarify external control by differentiating between luck or chance, and the action of powerful others, such as elected officials or special interests.

In an effort to determine whether ideology is related to control, Levenson and Miller (1976) administered a policy control scale with a measure of conservatism-liberalism. They reported a positive association between expectations of control by powerful others for liberals, whereas, for conservatives, a negative relationship existed. The researchers explained this difference, stating that liberals would view powerful others as inhibiting and, therefore, become more active. On the other hand, conservatives would perceive powerful others as legitimate sources of power, and therefore, activism is not required.

Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988) examined the relationship of various policy control factors (defined as psychological empowerment) to participation in voluntary organizations. The authors hypothesized that respondents who were active political participants would be more empowered. Empowerment was measured by a scale that included locus of control, self-efficacy, political efficacy, self-control, and civic duty. The results supported the hypothesis that "great participation in community activities and organization is associated with psychological empowerment" (p. 745). Zimmerman and Rappaport noted that, while causality was not determined, political participation may be a source of empowered individuals.

Persons who engage in political participation may be affected by psychological changes, such as sense of efficacy and policy control. Sussman and Steel (1991) noted that "citizens may achieve a sense of 'self-actualization' in their effort to have personal influence over the policy-making process" (p. 520). Leighley (1991) noted that political

participation "allows individuals to be informed, interested, and involved citizens who have a sense of control over their own lives" (p. 198). Political participation affects conceptualization, as the individual develops a more abstract understanding of politics, developing attitudes about the system's responsiveness and reinforcing the individual's political attitudes. Leighley suggests that more costly activities have a stronger effect on one's attitudes.

In order to determine whether political participation changes individuals' attitudes toward government, Finkel (1985) examined the relationship of internal and external political efficacy to voting and campaigning. Internal efficacy was determined to be a key psychological variable for self-actualization and was associated with an increased likelihood of further participation. Finkel concluded that political participation affects a sense of external efficacy, making it more likely that the individual will participate in the future. In a similar manner, non-participation reinforced the belief that the political system is unresponsive, making future participation less likely.

It would appear that changes in attitude persist over long periods of time. Fendrich and Turner (1989) conducted a 25-year follow-up of college activists and non-activists. They found that activists continued to be very active in institutional and protest activities. Yet, even those who were not involved showed an increase in institutional activities. This suggests that political participation increases with age and developing skills. Fendrich and Turner's findings are consistent with those of Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) regarding voting behavior.

The findings of Finkel, and those of Wolfinger and Rosenstone, support the proposition that social learning plays an important role in the development of social workers' perception of political engagement. Social learning theory is consistent with assertions that positive reinforcement results in the performance of targeted behaviors in the future, whereas negative reinforcements result in the absence of targeted behaviors (Bandura, 1977). Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) suggested that strong psychological engagement makes issue-specific activists more likely to contact legislators on that issue.

Psychological engagement may be the variable which best predicts the political participation of certified social workers, who may be similar on measures of resources and belong to the same or similar professional associations. Psychological variables can affect the individual's decision to participate, when the individual believes that policy-makers pay attention to the individual's input and that the individual's actions may change government policies. The following section presents information on models which may explain differences in individuals' political participation.

MODELS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Information on the frequency of political participation, especially voting, has been collected for decades. The most common sources of information include the Statistical Abstracts of the United States (Census Bureau, 1993), the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by the University of Chicago, and the American National Election Studies (ANES) from the University of Michigan (Conway, 1991; Miller & Traugott, 1989;

Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Items from these instruments have been included in other surveys to determine the political participation of social workers and others (Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Verba & Nie, 1972; Wolk, 1981; Woodward & Roper, 1950).

Political scientists have attempted to explain differences in the amount and type of Americans' political participation by focusing on differences in available resources (socioeconomic) or the perceived cost and benefits of participation (rational theory) (Conway, 1991; Milbrath, 1965; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980; Woodward & Roper, 1950). The socioeconomic model and rational theory are long-standing explanations for political participation. Recently, the civic voluntarism model has been offered to explain differences by focusing on the role of resources, in addition to political interest and networks of recruitment, in the performance of specific participatory acts (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The following section describes these three approaches toward explaining political participation.

Socioeconomic Model. Life experiences and social circumstances, including age, income, education, gender, ethnicity, and marital status, are the strongest predictors of political participation (Conway, 1991; Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972). Socioeconomic factors are easily quantifiable and, therefore, perceived to be reliable predictors of participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Life experiences and social circumstances also affect the development of beliefs, or psychological factors, which motivate participation (Conway, 1991). Individual perceptions regarding the responsiveness of government to input, as well as a general

interest in politics, have been linked to participation (Conway, 1991; Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990). Psychological factors are more difficult to measure than social circumstances and they are hard to place in causal relationships. It is likely that social circumstances, such as income and education, are a cause and not a result of participation; it is not as clear whether political interest or sense of efficacy are a result or a cause of participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Although psychological factors have been included in explanations of political participation, they are less robust predictors than socioeconomic factors such as education or income (Davidson & Cotter, 1989; Guth & Green, 1990).

The socioeconomic model of participation is based on sound empirical and political factors, but lacks theoretical grounding to explain the linkages between socioeconomic factors and participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). For instance, the socioeconomic model would not explain why individuals who hold strong beliefs on issues, such as abortion, or who receive benefits from public programs, are more politically active than one would predict on the basis of education or income alone (Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Rational Choice Theory. Rational choice theory offers another explanation for differences in political participation. The rational actor would not participate until four criteria have been met: 1) establishing a preference for one policy outcome over another; 2) ranking outcomes in order of preference; 3) having rules to link preferred outcomes to

actions for achieving them; and, 4) choosing the alternative(s) that can contribute to the targeted outcome (Conway, 1991).

Most political rewards are collective rewards, accruing to all persons or a group, rather than selective rewards, going to a specified individual (Hedge, 1984; Heunks, 1991). The rational actor would participate in politics when he or she perceives the possible rewards as exceeding the cost of participation. It is unlikely that a rational individual would see the benefits of voting outweighing the cost in time and lost opportunity (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). In fact, Verba, et al., suggest that persons with higher socioeconomic status would face higher opportunity costs to vote than would a person of lower socioeconomic status and, therefore, would be less likely to vote.

Rational choice does not address civic duty (Campbell, 1950) and fails to explain advocacy or mobilization by elites (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1985; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Social workers' political participation is often altruistic, such as advocacy on behalf of clients or mobilizing disenfranchised populations, particularly in community practice (Weismiller & Rome, 1995). Titmuss (1971) defined an altruistic act as one marked by "some sense of the obligation; approval and interest; feeling of 'inclusion' in society; awareness of need; and, the purpose of the gift" (p. 258).

Monroe (1994) said altruistic acts must entail some sacrifice to the actor's welfare and a reciprocal act is neither made nor expected. If the costs of political participation are high, the rational actor may not participate in the absence of rewards. Yet, social workers

and others engage in political participation on behalf of another person or population, counter to predictions of rational theory. Monroe suggested that a cognitive-perceptual approach, utilizing social learning, situational factors, and/or characteristics of the person in need of help, may explain altruistic political participation.

The developmental theory of Abraham Maslow has been applied to political participation (Conway, 1991; Sussman & Steel, 1991) and would run counter to the rational theory. Maslow suggested that individuals progress along a five-step hierarchy, with basic safety needs at the bottom and "self-actualization" at the top (Maslow, 1968). Applying Maslow's theory, one would predict that self-actualized persons engage in altruistic political acts. Rational choice is rich in theoretical grounds but fails to predict who will participate or how much they will participate (Verba, et al, 1995).

Civic Voluntarism Model. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) described the socioeconomic model and rational theory as deficient, and developed a resource-based model of participation. The Civic Voluntarism Model, which includes factors related to resources, political interest, and networks of recruitment, is preferable to those relying solely on socioeconomic status or rational choice because it "uses measurable factors; is causally prior to activity; is theoretically interpretable and substantively interesting; and is relevant to real issues of American politics" (Verba, et al., 1995, p. 274).

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady suggested that individuals fail to participate in politics because "they can't" (lack of capacity), "they don't want to" (no political engagement), or "nobody asked" (not networked with others). The socioeconomic and

rational approaches to political participation have focused on the motivation or resources for political participation. Verba, et al., proposed that even persons with motivation and capacity are most likely to perform political acts only if they are asked to participate.

The civic voluntarism model is based on resources, but includes political engagement and networks of recruitment as important factors in differentiating active from inactive individuals. Verba, et al., suggested that the civic voluntarism model improved on socioeconomic models by specifying "how socioeconomic position is related to political participation" (p. 19). They reported that the relative importance of education, income, or occupation is not absolute, but that it varies across methods of participation. For instance, income is highly related to contributing money to a campaign, but not to contributing time. Breaking political participation into various functions could be helpful for targeting requests to individuals who have the attributes or skills most congruent with the request.

The Citizen Participation Study consisted of 15,053 telephone interviews of 15-20 minutes conducted with adults of voting age in 1989. The sample was weighted and stratified by race, ethnicity, level, and type of political participation for 2-hour, in-person follow up interviews with 2,057 individuals. The results of the in-person surveys were analyzed using an ordinary least squares regression, identifying the factors which influence political participation. The factors are clustered into an initial step and four subsequent steps (Figure 2-4).

When a two-stage least squares regression was applied to correct for error in the measures, free time became a significant predictor of participation. The results of the two-stage least squares regression are shown in Figure 2-5, indicating that factors related to political engagement explain the greatest portion of differences in political participation. This reinforces the decision to examine the role of political engagement in explaining differences in the political participation of professional social workers. Since social workers may be similar on measures of socioeconomic status and belong to the same networks of recruitment (i.e., all may belong to NASW), political engagement may be the strongest predictor of differences in political participation.

Figure 2-4. Factors in the Civic Voluntarism Model identified by ordinary least squares. (Verba, et al, 1995).

Initial Characteristics: Parents' education (.04, p<.05), gender (-.03, p<.05), race (NS), ethnicity (NS).

Step 1. Using initial characteristics to predict pre-adult experiences: exposure to politics at home (.04 p<.01), respondents' education (.12, p<.01), high school activities (.08, p<.01).

Step 2. Using initial characteristics and pre-adult experiences to predict institutional involvement: Job level (.03, NS), affiliation with non-political organization (.01, NS), religious attendance (-.01, NS).

Step 3. Using initial characteristics, pre-adult experience, and institutional involvement to predict participation factors: Family income (.09, p<.01), free time (-.02, NS), civic skills (.14, p<.01), vocabulary (.05, p<.05), recruitment (.13, p<.01), political interest (.24, p<.01), political information (.12 p<.01).

Step 4. Using initial characteristics, pre-adult experiences, institutional involvement, and participation factors to predict participation. [[data to follow?]]

Figure 2-5. Two-stage least squares regression identified three factors related to participation. (Verba, et al., 1995).

Resources	Beta	Sig.
Education	.12	<.01
Vocabulary	.02	ns
Income	.09	<.01
Free time	.10	<.01
Civic skills (summary variable)	.16	<.01
Citizenship	.07	<.01
Political Engagement		
Political interest	.49	<.01
Political information	.13	<.05
Recruitment		
Recruitment (summary variable)	.02	ns

Studies of social workers' political participation (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981) have reported differences based on socioeconomic factors. Reeser (1988a, 1988b) and Reeser and Epstein (1991) examined social workers' commitment to social action, which included similar measures of political participation; their reported differences were consistent with a model based on rational choice. It is believed that this study is the first application of the civic voluntarism model to social workers' political participation.

Although resources and networks of recruitment are important explanations of political participation, they are not susceptible to external interventions, other than reducing membership fees in associations. On the other hand, social work educators or professional associations could develop interventions to increase social workers' sense of political engagement.

Models of political participation are essential for understanding political participation and developing strategies to increase the participation of professional social workers. The socioeconomic model and rational choice theory have not been cited in earlier studies of social workers' participation, which primarily sampled members of NASW who may be homogeneous in resources; furthermore, social workers traditionally advocate on behalf of clients so that rational choice would not predict such participation. The civic voluntarism model, which includes political engagement, may be best suited to explain why some social workers are not politically active.

It is possible that social work's historical role in advocacy, including political participation, may attract individuals who have been socialized for political action. The following section provides an overview of political socialization and variables which may determine whether political activists enter the social work field or if social work practice nurtures political activists.

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

"Political socialization" describes the process by which an individual acquires political skills (Kinder & Sears, 1985). An intergenerational transfer of resources and political engagement often occurs between parent and child (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The parent conveys to the child the importance of civic duty or political participation and the skills necessary for successful participation.

Development of the individual's political habits--along with other social skills--is influenced by the environment and exposure to political influences. For example, the types of employment held by working mothers was a strong predictor of women's political participation (Reece, Beatty & Dukes, 1983). Political socialization during elementary school may set the tenor of the individual's future political participation (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). The political participation of parents when an individual was 16 years old affects the individual's later political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), but socialization is a life-long process, responsive to changing situations and experiences (Orum, Cohen, Grasmuch, & Orum, 1974; Strate, Parrish, Elder & Ford, 1989).

Theories from political science and psychology have been offered to predict or explain the development of "citizenship." Kohlberg's moral typology has been applied to political participation (Tygart, 1984; Wilson & Schochet, 1980) as has Maslow's theory of self-actualization (Conway, 1991; Sussman & Steel, 1991). Social learning theory was suggested as a factor in the development of altruistic political participation (Monroe, 1994).

Historically, political socialization models suggest that experiences and opportunities have favored men and whites and, therefore, these groups were more likely to engage in political participation. The sex-role and power differences between males and females, and whites and non-whites, explained the lower participation rate of non-whites and females, and was consistent with studies of political participation conducted in

the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. As noted earlier, societal changes make this model less relevant, since the differential between male and female participation has decreased (Schlozman, Burns, Verba, & Donahue, 1995; Secret & Welch, 1989).

There are also environmental factors which may affect political socialization, including the geographic region in which a person resides (Elazar, 1972). For instance, in New York State, the upstate areas have been Republican and New York City democratic. Yet, these dynamics seem to change with suburbanization; in 1997, Democrats held only three of 57 county executive offices, having lost New York City, where Democrats hold a registration edge over Republicans, to a Republican mayor in 1993 (New York State Election Board, 1995).

Elazar described three prevalent political cultures in the United States: individualistic, moralistic, and traditionalistic. Each culture was shaped by the values of the immigrants who settled in the U.S. and migrated from east to west. Upstate New York was influenced by the eastward migration of Puritans from Massachusetts; downstate, including New York City, was influenced by the migration of German immigrants, who continued into Pennsylvania and Ohio. In a study of Italians' political participation, specifically contacting elected officials, Putnam (1993) reported regional variations in citizens' reasons for contacting public officials varied. Citizens in areas with larger numbers of civil associations "displayed more political sophistication, social trust, political participation, and subjective civic competence" (p. 89). Subjects in less civic

areas contacted legislators more frequently but the purpose was more often personal, rather than public, issues.

Social workers' political participation in 1997 will be affected by their political socialization. By determining the importance of political participation in the respondent's family of origin and the region in which the individual resides, it is possible to determine whether social work creates or attracts political activists. This will have implications for the following discussion of social learning theory and its possible application to the development of interventions targeted toward social workers' political participation.

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Citizens' decisions regarding the amount and type of political participation are complex. Some of the factors in decision making include: "the life circumstances of citizens, their psychological orientation to politics, the political and legal environment in which they exist, the laws and governmental rules that regulate participation, and the choices citizens make about their participation" (Conway, 1991, p. 156). Attempting to apply any single theory to predict political participation when so many factors are relevant is a daunting task.

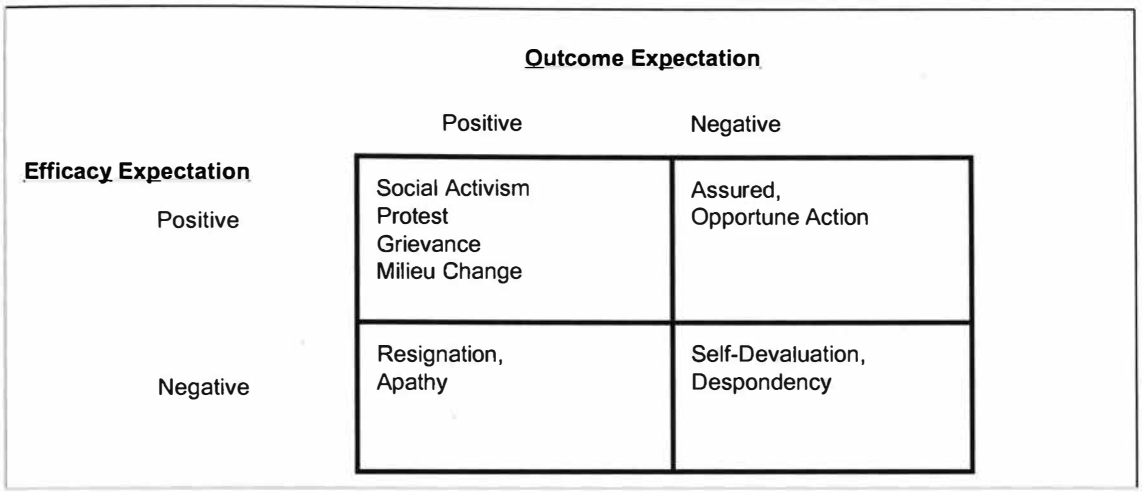
Social learning theory was used to explain the complex factors involved in aggressive behavior (Bandura, 1978a). Bandura described aggression as "a multifaceted phenomenon with many determinants [that] serves diverse purposes. A complete theory of aggression must be sufficiently broad in scope to encompass a large set of variables

governing diverse facets of aggression, whether individual or collective, personal or institutionally sanctioned" (p. 12).

Developing skills in political participation, like developing aggressive behaviors, results from the interaction of the person, environment, and behavior. Individuals create not only their memories of learning experiences, but also expectations of future action (Bandura, 1977). Self-regulation occurs through a process of self-observation, making judgments about what has been learned, and then generating self-response in the form of behaviors (Bandura, 1978a). The interaction of person and environment is reciprocal, leading to a "chicken-or-egg" debate when assessing causality (Bandura, 1978b, p. 354). Social learning theory has been described as "cognitive behaviorism," reflecting the interactions taking place, which differentiate social learning from strict behaviorist models focusing on stimulus and response, such as Skinnerian theory (Monte, 1991).

Bandura (1982) noted that behavior is dependent on the interaction of efficacy expectations (i.e., perceived mastery of skills) and outcome expectations (i.e., the estimation that a particular outcome will occur if the right processes are brought to bear). The interaction of efficacy and outcome expectations is illustrated in Figure 2-6.

Figure 2-6. Interactive effects of efficacy and outcome expectations on behavior and affective reactions. (Bandura, 1982, p. 140).



Perceived efficacy is more important than perceived outcome when the individual is developing a plan of action. In fact, efficacious persons, who cannot achieve a positive outcome by their actions, rather than giving up, will intensify their efforts and try to change the environment. Bandura (1977) suggested that motivation for a particular activity is at a peak level when strong efficacy is combined with moderate uncertainty regarding the outcome. People who feel they lack mastery of skills may retreat into apathy or despondency. The most extreme effect of apathy would be learned helplessness, with individuals perceiving action as useless.

Social learning theory has been applied not only to learning new behaviors but to modifying or extinguishing undesired behaviors, such as phobias (Bandura, 1980; Berry,

1989). Bandura noted that the likelihood of a behavior being performed is a product of the individual's perceived self-efficacy and his/her expectation regarding the outcome. Self-efficacy has been applied to a range of behaviors, including academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, career goals, health-related behaviors, parenting skills, and clinical disorders (Berry, 1989; Grusec, 1992).

Social learning interventions. Bandura (1977) suggested four types of interventions, based on social learning theory, to develop or extinguish targeted behaviors: 1) performance accomplishment, 2) vicarious experience, 3) verbal persuasion, or 4) emotional arousal. Performance accomplishment, described by Bandura as the most effective method, allows the individual to perform the targeted behavior. Vicarious experiences place the individual in a situation in which he/she observes another performing the targeted behavior. The vicarious experience may either be direct, or through the use of role playing or video presentations. Verbal persuasion occurs when an individual is exhorted to believe that he or she can perform a behavior seen as overwhelming. Emotional arousal, the final method, utilizes biofeedback or relaxation techniques to reduce an anxiety-provoking situation.

It has been suggested that social workers utilize skills based on social learning theory in direct practice (Wodarski, 1983) and in programs to discourage inappropriate behaviors, such as adolescents driving under the influence of alcohol (Wodarski, 1986/87). Weisner and Silver (1981) encouraged social workers in community practice to utilize social learning theory to increase citizen participation in meetings. Finally, Thyer

and Wodarski (1990) proposed social learning theory as the founding principle for the development of curriculum in social work education programs, including policy development and field practicum.

CONCLUSIONS

It appears that the development of political skills is based on resources as well as political engagement and networks of recruitment (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Bandura (1977) established the importance of self-efficacy in developing interventions to increase targeted behaviors. Political engagement is also referred to by the term "political efficacy" (Conway, 1991), and it is suggested in this study that increased political engagement serves to increase social workers' political participation. The next chapter presents the methodology for surveying professional social workers on the amount and type of political participation. The items in the survey are based on those socioeconomic and psychological factors identified in the literature as significant in explaining differences in political participation (Verba & Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Bandura's theory of self-efficacy has been suggested as the basis for interventions to decrease social work students' negative attitudes toward research (Montcalm, 1996). If, as expected, political efficacy is a robust predictor of political participation, social work educators and professional associations could develop interventions based on social

learning theory to increase the perceived political engagement and, subsequently, the political participation, of social work students and practitioners.

Chapter 3
Procedures and Methodology

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Research has indicated that social workers who belong to the National Association of Social Workers are more politically active than the general public (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991 and 1993; Parker and Sherraden, 1991). In order to determine the effect of the predictor variables (resources, networks, and political engagement) on social workers' political participation and to develop a model which predicts political participation, it is necessary first to determine the amount and type of social workers' political participation. The current study sampled 500 certified social workers (CSWs) in New York to determine how often in the last two years they: voted; contacted government officials; volunteered in a campaign; contributed money to candidates or parties; or participated in rallies or demonstrations. Information was also collected from respondents regarding available resources, membership in professional social work associations, and perceived political engagement. Ordinary least squares regression was used to determine the relative importance of interval variables (e.g., years since receipt of the MSW degree, annual income, activity in a professional social work association, and perceived policy control) in explaining differences in social workers' political participation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Q1. Do certified social workers in New York engage in political participation?

Political participation encompasses a range of activities directed at affecting the development of public policy or elected officials, such as voting, contacting elected officials, and contributing money to campaigns (Conway, 1991). Most individuals perform some, but not all, forms of political participation. Indices have been used to measure respondents' political participation, with points awarded for engaging in each constituent act (Woodward & Roper, 1950; Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 1993). Summing the scores provides a relative measure of political participation, with higher scores indicating greater political participation. In the current study, respondents' scores may range from 0 (no participation) to 12 (maximum participation).

Items in the political participation scale (PPS) are listed in Table 3-1, along with the scoring values. The items are consistent with other measures of political participation of social workers (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 1993) and the general public (Woodward & Roper, 1950; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The similarity of the indices facilitates a comparison of social workers' political participation in 1980 and 1989 and a comparison with a recent study of public political participation by the public (Verba, et al., 1995).

Earlier research on political participation has used cutting scores to differentiate "active" from "inactive" participants. Ezell (1993) defined respondents with scores of 0-

Table 3-1. The Political Participation Score (Dependent Variable) differentiates between the politically active and inactive social worker.

Activity	Score
Membership in a professional social work organization	1=Yes; 0=No
Voting in the 1996 presidential election	1=Yes; 0=No
Voting in previous presidential elections	2=All or most; 1 = Rarely; 0=Never
Participating in a protest/march/demonstration	1=Yes; 0=No
Testifying before a legislative body	1=Yes; 0=No
Volunteering in a campaign	1=Yes; 0=No
Making a financial contribution to candidate, party or campaign	1=Yes; 0=No
Contacting officials: letter/phone/fax/e-mail	1=Yes; 0=No
Contacting officials in person	1=Yes; 0=No
Discussing politics with family, friends or colleagues	2=Frequently; 1=Rarely; 0=Never
Maximum Possible Score	**12**

2 as "inactive," scores of 3-5 designated "active" social workers, and those with 6-8 were "very active." Ezell compared responses in 1989 to Wolk's 1981 study of political participation, reporting that social workers were more active after the Reagan presidency than before. Ezell's findings are used as a bench mark, to determine whether social workers in New York are more active in 1997 than were Washington State social workers in 1989.

Each item in the index is scored the same (1=yes, 0=no) although there are variations in the cost of performing each act. An index provides a relative comparison of individuals' political participation, but may be criticized for equating acts low in cost (such as voting) with those higher in cost (e.g., testifying before a legislative body). Wolk (1981) and Ezell (1991, 1993) eliminated questions about voting from their political indices, dismissing voting as a "passive" activity. Parker and Sherraden (1991), however, included questions about voting, reporting that more than 90 percent of social

workers vote, compared to less than 60 percent of the general population. They suggested that the social work vote could influence the outcome of close elections. Future analysis of the data may examine differences among social workers who perform political acts with different costs (e.g., available time for campaign work; annual income for contributions).

Hypotheses. The survey of certified social workers develops a database of participation and related demographic factors. In addition to testing the effect of the three predictors, the data allow comparison with earlier research on social workers' participation (Ezell, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1992) and participation rates of the general public (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). For comparison purposes, the scores for social worker or public participation are provided in parentheses. The hypotheses regarding the performance of specific acts are:

H.1 The percentage of certified social workers voting in 1996 will be less than the 92.8 percent of NASW members voting in 1988. (Parker & Sherraden, 1991)

H.2 Fewer than 10 percent of certified social workers will have worked for a candidate's election in the past two years. (Ezell, 27.3%; Parker & Sherraden, 12.2%)

H.3 Fewer than 25 percent of certified social workers will have donated money to a candidate, political committee or party in the past two years. (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 23%; Ezell, 45%; Parker & Sherraden, 58%)

H.4 More than 75 percent of certified social workers will have contacted a government official by phone, letter, fax or e-mail in the past two years. (Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 24%; Ezell, 89%)

H.5 Fewer than 5 percent of certified social workers will have testified before a legislative body in the past two years. (Ezell, 5%)

H.6 Fewer than 5 percent of certified social workers will have attended a rally, march or demonstration in the past two years. (Verba, 6%)

PREDICTOR (INDEPENDENT) VARIABLES

Many variables have been used to predict or explain differences in individuals' political participation including income, education, type of employment (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), membership in associations (Knoke, 1982; Baumgartner & Walker, 1990), and political efficacy and socialization (Craig, Niemi & Mattei, 1991; Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). Studies of social workers' political participation have identified differences in task activity on the basis of practice method, population served, and education (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991).

Grouping individual variables into broad categories of predictor variables has been utilized to explain differences in activity and attitudes (Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Henderson, Monroe, Garand, & Burts, 1995). Verba, Schlozman, & Brady (1995) grouped individual variables of political participation into three broad categories of *resources*, *networks of recruitment*, and *political engagement* to explain differences in

participation. The political participation score (PPS) is calculated by summing answers to questions about specific acts. The PPS score is the dependent variable in exploring the relationship between the three predictor variables (resources, networks of recruitment, and political engagement).

The following sections present the individual variables which are incorporated into each of the three predictor variables.

PREDICTOR ONE: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Q2. Is there a relationship between resources (years since MSW, annual family income, number of children under the age of 5 years, and hours worked per week) and political participation as measured by the PPS?

Research in political science has indicated that income and years of education are the strongest predictors of political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Guth & Green, 1989). Although certified social workers may be a relatively homogeneous group, there are likely to be differences among respondents on the basis of income and available time. Respondents provide demographic information using fill-in-the-blank and forced-choice items. The selected demographics are based on the literature review of factors that are associated with political participation in the general population and include: age (month/year of birth), gender, ethnicity (Hispanic, Black (not Hispanic), White (not Hispanic), American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander; or other), education (master's or post-master's degree), and annual family income. Annual family income and

employment status, as well as age, gender, and ethnicity, indirectly, if not directly, affect socioeconomic status.

Years since receipt of the MSW degree may be a better indicator than age, since some enter the field as a second career or after raising a family. Wagner (1989) reported that perceived activism was higher among students and recent graduates compared to experienced practitioners. Since most, if not all, respondents hold an MSW degree, there are likely to be few differences on the basis of education.

An understanding of the policy-making process and interventions to affect social policy are important for political participation and has been estimated using a measure of civic skills (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). All MSW practitioners should have civic skills (i.e., writing letters, organizing meetings, and communicating with others) as defined by Verba, et al. The Council on Social Work Education's curriculum standards for MSW programs require that all students be educated regarding the establishment of social policy and interventions to influence policy development (CSWE, 1994, Standards, M6.10 in NASW Encyclopedia of Social Work, 1996). Yet, macropractice students are more likely than micropractice students to be placed in a policy field internship (Wolk, Pray, Weismiller, & Dempsey, 1996).

Earlier studies of social workers' political participation have reported differences on the basis of practice setting or method or population served (Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991; Wolk, 1981). Reports that social workers in macropractice are more politically active than those in micropractice, however, may oversimplify differences in

participation. Berlin (1990) cautioned that overreliance on dichotomous variables, such as practice method, may mask subtle differences.

Respondents provided information about social work practice, based on the categories used in the NASW membership application. This is used to determine whether earlier relationships between practice method and participation (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991) exist among CSWs. Although the NASW membership is not the source of the sample, it provides a comparison with the sample on practice and demographics. Social work practice method (micropractice versus macropractice) may be used as a control variable.

The social workers' practice setting and agency auspice may also affect political participation. Those social workers who practice in state or federal agencies may have real or perceived limits placed on partisan political participation, in the form of federal or state Hatch Acts (Thompson, 1994). Social workers in private settings, in an era of downsizing, also may have additional restrictions placed on political participation. Collecting information on practice auspice helps determine whether these factors affect the volume or type of political participation.

Earlier studies of social workers' political participation have not asked social workers about time available for political participation, including marital status, number of children, and holding a second job. Verba, Schlozman, & Brady (1995) reported that respondents with a working spouse had six hours fewer per week for political participation. Verba added that individuals with children under the age of 5 years are less likely to be politically active. Gathering information on the social worker's availability

may help determine whether there are external factors (such as child care demands and part-time employment) which prevent the respondent from engaging in political activity with high time costs.

The resource variables to be included are listed in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Resource variables, including income, hours worked, and age of children, affect the respondents' availability for political participation.

Variable	Description
Annual family income	Amount in dollars.
Highest social work degree	1 =masters; 2=post-masters degree
Age	Respondent's age (in years)
Gender	1=female; 0=male
Ethnicity	1=American Indian; 2=Asian/Pacific Islander; 3=Black (not Hispanic); 4=Hispanic; 5= White (not Hispanic); 6=other
Marital status	1=single/never married; 2=separated; 3=divorced; 4=married; 5=domestic partnership; 6=widow/widower
Number children under 5 years	Number (if any)
Employment status	1=full-time; 2=part-time; 3=retired; 4=full-time student; 5=searching for job; 6=not working now
Hours worked per week or in school	Number of hours
Social work setting	Business/industry; College/university; court/justice system; Health--inpatient; Health--outpatient; Managed care; Mental Health—inpatient; Mental Health--outpatient; Private Practice--Group; Private Practice--solo; Residential Facility; School (pre-school to grade 12); Social service agency; Public Assistance/welfare; Other (specify)
Social work function	Administration/Management; Community Organization/Advocacy; Clinical/Direct practice; Policy Analysis/ Research; Teaching; Training (agency-based); Other (specify)
Social work agency auspice	Private, for profit; Private, nonprofit; Federal, military; Federal, nonmilitary; State government; Local government; Self-employed
Years since MSW degree	Calculated variable (1997-MSW)

Hypotheses. The survey of certified social workers tested the following hypotheses to determine a relationship between resources and participation, as measured by the Political Participation Scale:

H.7 There is a positive relationship between annual income and political participation.

H.8 There is a negative relationship between hours worked per week and political participation.

H.9 There is a negative relationship between number of children under the age of 5 years and political participation.

H.10 There is a negative relationship between years since MSW degree and political participation.

PREDICTOR TWO: NETWORKS OF RECRUITMENT

Q3. Is there a relationship between networks of recruitment (active membership in social work associations and mobilization for voting or contacting by social work associations) and political participation?

Verba, et al., (1995) suggested that individuals do not engage in political activity because no one has asked. Individuals who belong to voluntary associations, including professional associations, are more likely to engage in political activity (Knoke, 1982; Baumgartner & Walker, 1990). Items in predictor variable two are included in Table 3-3.

Research has indicated that individuals engage in political activity when they are asked to participate. Networks of recruitment to political participation include family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and voluntary associations, including professional social work associations (Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995). NASW and other professional social work associations utilize legislative response networks to mobilize members for political participation (NASW, Government Relations survey of chapter networks, 1993; Hooyman, 1996). The instrument includes two questions to determine whether, in the last two years, respondents were asked to "vote for or against certain candidates in an election for public office" or "take some other action on a political issue--sign a petition, write a letter, or contact a public official" by a professional social work association. Each item is scored "0" for no and "1" for yes; a maximum score of 2 indicates the respondent has been recruited for voting **and** contacting an official by a social work association. Earlier studies of social workers' political participation primarily sampled members of the NASW (Parker & Sherraden, 1992; Wolk, 1981). Ezell (1991, 1993, 1994) sampled non-NASW social workers in addition to NASW members, but did not report significant differences in their political participation. Certified social workers may belong to no professional associations, or to one or more associations, including NASW.

Respondents were asked to indicate their involvement with a series of professional social work associations in New York, including the two largest: NASW and the Society of Clinical Social Workers. Choices are: not a member (1), pay dues only (2) (passive), attend meetings of the association (3) (active), or hold office in the association

(4) (very active). Knoke (1990) reported that level of activity in a voluntary association is strongly related to political participation. Collecting information on respondents' membership allows the researcher to explore the relationship between political participation (dependent variable) and activity in professional social work associations.

Table 3-3. Networks of recruitment may influence respondents' access to information and frequency of requests for political participation.

Variable	Description
Membership activity in professional social work association	1=do not belong; 2=member; 3=active; 4=hold office
Recruitment to action by social work association	2=recruited to contact official **and** to vote; 1=recruited to contact official **or** to vote; 0=not recruited

Hypotheses. The survey of certified social workers explored the relationship between networks of recruitment and political participation, as measured by the PPS, by testing the hypotheses that:

H.11 There is a positive relationship between membership activity (1=not a member to 4=hold office in association) in a professional social work association and political participation.

H.12 There is a positive relationship between recruitment to political activity by a professional social work association and political participation.

PREDICTOR THREE: PERCEIVED POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Q4. Is there a relationship between political engagement (perceived efficacy and strong political identity) and political participation?

Some individuals do not engage in political participation because they do not want to, i.e., they do not perceive their participation to make a difference (Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995). Persons who are politically efficacious are more likely to vote, contribute money, contact elected officials, or volunteer in campaigns, than individuals who perceive themselves as low in efficacy. Those who perceive themselves as having control over their environment (Lumpkin, 1985; Collins, 1974; Levenson & Miller, 1974; Levenson & Miller, 1976) or, at a minimum, having the ability to affect the policy-making process, are more likely to engage in political action (Craig, Niemi, & Mattei, 1991). The items used to collect information on political engagement are listed in Table 3-4.

The primary measure of political engagement is the sociopolitical control scale (Zimmerman and Zahniser, 1991). This 17-item scale collects information on respondents' perceived political efficacy and locus of control. It includes subscales for leadership competence (efficacy) and sense of policy control. The sociopolitical control scale requires that respondents indicate agreement or disagreement with statements using a 6-point Likert scale. Items 9 through 17 are reverse scored; total scores are summed and may range from 17 to 102, with higher scores indicating greater leadership competence and policy control. Scores on the leadership (efficacy) subscale range from 8 to 48; scores for the policy control subscale range from 9 to 54. The SPCS has reported alpha coefficients from .75 to .78 for three administrations. Items in the SPCS which address

political efficacy, control, and civic duty are similar to questions used in the ANES (Miller & Traugott, 1989).

Studies indicate that strong political partisans or ideologues are more likely to participate in politics (Conway, 1991). It has been reported that NASW members are overwhelmingly Democrats (NASW, PACE, 1995). Respondents to the current survey indicated whether they identify with a political party, i.e., strong or weak Democrat or Republican, or independent. Similarly, social workers are perceived as liberals (Koeske & Crouse, 1981). Respondents will be asked to self-identify on a scale of liberal-to-conservative, from 1 ("extremely liberal") to 7 ("extremely conservative") (Traugott & Miller, 1989).

Self-reported measures are, by definition, limited due to the absence of absolute referents for "liberal" or "conservative." However, political engagement is a perceived psychological attribute, therefore, this is an important construct in the measurement of certified social workers' political engagement.

Persons with high political interest may participate in politics regardless of sense of efficacy or control. The citizen participation study (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) included a two-item question on political interest. Respondents' interest in national and local politics and affairs may range from "not at all interested" (coded 0) to "very interested" (coded 3). Verba, et al., reported a Pearson correlation of .54 between the two items. Political interest may be utilized as a control variable.

Table 3-4. Political engagement increases the prospect that respondents view political participation as instrumental in achieving desired outcomes.

Variable	Description
Sociopolitical control score (SPCS)	17-item scale; total scores from 17 to 102, higher scores greater leadership and control.
Political partisanship	7-item scale, from 1 (Strong Democrat) to 7 (Strong Republican)
Political ideology	7-item scale, from 1 (extremely liberal) to 7 (extremely conservative)
Political interest	4-item scale of interest in local and national politics, 0 (not at all interested) to 3 (very interested).

Hypotheses. The relationship between political participation, as measured by the PPS, and perceived political engagement of certified social workers is tested with the following hypotheses:

H.13 There is a positive relationship between the Sociopolitical Control Scale and political participation.

H.14 There is a positive relationship between strength of political partisanship (strong Democrat or Republican) and political participation.

H.15 There is a positive relationship between strength of political ideology (extremely liberal or extremely conservative) and political participation.

H.16 There is a positive relationship between political interest and political participation.

Pretesting Survey. The instrument was pretested on a sample of social work practitioners and students available to the researcher. Pretesting allowed for reworking of questions or items which were ambiguous or unclear. The major changes made as a result of pretesting were the inclusion of "self-employed" to the list of employer types and clarification of the

questions about activity in professional social work associations. If there are items in the final instrument with few or no responses, however, there may be further adjustments made prior to data analysis.

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

Population of certified social workers. The New York State Education Department has certified more than 40,000 social workers since enactment of title protection in 1965; 32,000 CSWs are currently certified. Purposive sampling is appropriate in the selection of a research sample (Rubin & Babbie, 1989, p. 229). CSWs were chosen for sampling since the researcher lives and works in New York.

The sample of CSWs provides a single level of MSW-level practitioners, not limited to "clinical" social workers, that is, those who provide direct or psychotherapy services. Future studies may choose to survey social workers in states with multiple levels of certification or licensure (e.g., Texas), or those with advanced clinical licensure only (e.g., Virginia), to determine whether there are differences in the political participation of social workers on the basis of degree or licensed title.

Sample size. Earlier studies of social workers' political participation have utilized samples of 500 or less. This study sampled 500 CSWs from the total population of 30,000 CSWs (1.67%). The Education department cannot provide a random listing of CSWs; they make available only an alphabetical listing by region or statewide. The Department provided a sample of CSWs, starting at a random point between the numbers 1 and 60, and selecting every 60th name throughout the remainder of the list, generating a

total list of 600 names. There were 20 names provided with missing or incomplete addresses; these were deleted from the sample. The researcher then took 500 of the remaining names for the initial survey; the remainder were reserved to replace subjects with expired mailing addresses. The name and address of each CSW was included in a database for generating mailing labels, personalized cover letters, and for tracking responses.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Data Collection. Each subject received a mailing consisting of a personalized cover letter of explanation, the survey and a prepaid postcard addressed to the researcher. The cover letter was printed on VCU School of Social Work stationery and signed by the researcher (Appendix A). The 11-page survey is two-sided, printed on 8-1/2 by 11-inch paper, folded to 5-1/2 by 8-1/2 and saddle-stitched. The back cover of the survey is a preprinted business reply mailer, addressed to the researcher. Respondents are directed to staple or tape the completed survey closed and drop it in the U.S. mail. [The survey instrument is included as Appendix B.]

In order to maintain anonymity of respondents, there were no identifiers used on the surveys. Respondents were asked to return a business-reply postcard to the researcher to indicate that the completed survey had been mailed. The postcard included a label with the name and license number of the respondent; this enabled the researcher to track non-respondents. Respondents who did not wish to participate in the survey were asked to

indicate this on the postcard and return the card to the researcher. There were 31 CSWs who asked not to participate in the study. The postcard also directed individuals to indicate whether they would like a summary of the research findings.

The survey procedure is based on Dillman's "Total Design Method" (Dillman, 1978) and consists of the following steps. First, a cover letter explaining the survey is prepared, with the subject's name and address typed on each letter. The survey, cover letter, and business reply postcard were sent to the subject by first-class mail on September 6, 1997. Exactly one week later, on September 13, 1997, a postcard was mailed to each subject, thanking those who had returned their surveys and serving as a reminder to those who had not yet responded. A total of 137 surveys were returned at the end of the first wave.

On October 6, 1997, a follow-up letter was sent to those who had not responded, along with a new survey and postcard. The letter emphasized the need to respond. The second wave generated 75 additional responses. The final follow-up mailing was made on November 4, 1997. This final mailing included a survey, a return postcard, and cover letter appealing for participation. Dillman recommended sending this final package via certified mail; however, regular mail yields acceptable return rates at significantly less expense (Keeter, personal communication, 1994). Approximately 50 percent of the surveys had been returned by this time, so the final mailing was sent via regular mail. The third and final wave yielded another 30 responses, for a total of 242.

Dillman stated that the TDM process, when properly followed, results in a return rate of 70 to 75%. A response rate in this range would provide 350 to 375 surveys, sufficient for multiple regression analysis. Dillman's estimate was overly optimistic; the final response rate of 50 percent did yield sufficient responses at a reasonable cost for mailing and production.

Surveys which were returned for incorrect addresses were re-mailed to the forwarding address, if provided. In 58 cases, no forwarding address was available, so a replacement name was drawn randomly from the total population of CSWs and this replacement received all surveys and mailings.

Subject Cooperation and Informed Consent. The sample was drawn without advance notification to the participants. Subjects received a cover letter which: explained the purpose and benefits of the study, explained confidentiality, provided an estimate of the time needed to complete the study, and gave instructions for receiving a copy of the results or reaching the researcher. The return of the completed survey is taken as implied consent to participate in the study. Subjects with specific questions or concerns were offered the opportunity to contact the researcher by telephone (only two called). The Education department provides only the names and addresses of CSWs; it does not release the phone numbers of licensees. This prevented plans to contact non-respondents for detailed follow-up.

Human Subjects Review. This research project was submitted to the Committee on the Conduct of Human Research (CCHR) of Virginia Commonwealth University on

April 2, 1996. The committee approved the study on July 3, 1996, when the researcher agreed to omit unique identifiers from the surveys. The CCHR extended its approval in July 1997 for an additional year, to allow completion of the survey.

DATA ANALYSIS

The political participation (dependent variable) score was calculated by summing the affirmative responses to questions about specific political acts. Certified social workers' performance of component acts in the political participation score and their total participation score are compared to earlier studies of social workers' political participation with univariate analysis. The performance of political acts included in the index allows the creation of a composite score, ranging from 0 to 12, with higher scores indicating greater political participation. The Political Participation Score is an interval score, used as the dependent variable in an ordinary least squares regression to determine the effect of the predictor variables on participation.

UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS

After the completion of data entry, frequencies, means and standard deviations are calculated for the following variables:

Demographics: Gender; ethnicity; respondents' employment status; spouses' employment status.

Social work practice:	MSW concentration (micro, macro, generalist); years since receipt of MSW degree (1997-value); social work function (9 items); work setting (15 items); agency auspice (7 items).
Resources:	Annual family income (dollars); hours worked per week; marital status; number of children under age 5 years.
Networks:	Activity in professional social work association; recruited by social work association to contact official; recruited by social work association to vote.
Political engagement:	Sociopolitical control score; political partisanship; political ideology; political interest.
Political socialization:	Father's total education; mother's total education; frequency of political discussions at home when respondent was age 16; frequency of mother's political activity when respondent was age 16; frequency of father's political activity when respondent was age 16.
Voting in 1996:	A score of "1" indicates the respondent voted in the 1996 presidential election.
Election work:	A score of "1" indicates the respondent worked for a candidate's election.
Contributions:	A score of "1" indicates the respondent contributed money to a candidate, party or political committee.

Contacting: A score of "1" indicates the respondent contacted a government official by phone, letter, fax or e-mail.

Testifying: A score of "1" indicates the respondent testified before a legislative body.

Rally/Demonstration: A score of "1" indicates the respondent attended a rally, march or demonstration.

Political Participation: The Political Participation Score (PPS) is calculated by summing the performance of specific acts of political participation, defined in Table 3-1; scores on the PPS range from 0 to 12, with higher scores indicating greater political participation. The PPS is the dependent variable in the ordinary least squares regression.

Hypotheses Testing. If the data appears to be normally distributed, univariate analysis (frequencies) is used to test hypotheses 1 through 6, regarding the frequency of certified social workers' performance of specific acts, e.g., voting, campaigning, contributing money. This provides a snapshot of participation in the period 1995-1997 and allows comparison with earlier studies of social workers' participation (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1993).

The univariate analyses guided decisions to collapse variables. The dependent variable, political participation score, was used to distinguish politically inactive social workers from active and very active social workers. Earlier studies defined "inactive" as

0-1, active as 2-3, and very active as 4-12 (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991). Decisions regarding "inactive," "active" and "very active" on the political participation scale are affected by the range of scores. Similarly, several of the independent variables were categorized into two or more categories. For instance, ethnicity was treated as "white" and "non-white" due to insufficient respondents in the ethnic categories. These decisions are discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

ORDINARY LEAST SQUARES REGRESSION

Explanations of political participation are not as simple as confirming a relationship between political participation and years of education, annual income, or even perceived political engagement (Verba, et al., 1995; Conway, 1991). In order to determine the effect of the three predictor variables (resources, networks of recruitment, and political efficacy) on the political participation of social workers, ordinary least squares regression is used to determine how well the three predictors explain political participation.

Although three similar predictors were significant in explaining the political participation of a general population (Verba, et al., 1995), the sample of certified social workers is a relatively homogeneous sample and, therefore, differences may not be found on all predictors. The earlier studies of social workers' political participation have not reported on such detailed explanations for differences (Ezell, 1991 & 1993; Wolk, 1981). The exploratory nature of this study justifies application of OLS to determine whether the

three predictor variables are significant explanations of differences in certified social workers' political participation.

The questions used in the study are taken from earlier research on political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995) and on empowerment (Zimmerman & Zahn, 1991). The only changes in wording were to focus on membership in **social work** organizations (numbers 29-30 and 67-75). Questions regarding social work practice and agency auspice were taken from the NASW membership application. (For more discussion on reliability of measures, see page 95). In order to simplify presentation and analysis, related items are included in scales where appropriate. For instance, the Political Participation Score is a summative scale, indicating performance of constituent political acts (e.g., voting, campaigning, contacting); the Sociopolitical Control Score provides a single number (between 17 and 102) with higher scores indicative of greater perceived policy control and efficacy.

Information on the coding of variables was included in Tables 3-1 through 3-4. The variables included in the regression analysis, collected under the general headings of *resources, recruitment,* and *engagement*, and *political socialization* are:

Resources:

- Annual family income (in dollars)
- Years since receipt of MSW degree (1997 minus year MSW received)
- Number of children under 5 years of age (value)
- Hours worked (or in school) each week (value)

Networks of Recruitment:

- Activity in professional social work association (0=do not belong to 3=hold office)
- Recruitment by professional social work association (0=no; 1=recruited for voting **or** contacting; 2=recruited for voting **and** contacting)

Political Engagement:

- Sociopolitical control score (calculated value between 17 and 102, higher scores indicate more control and efficacy)
- Political interest (0=not interested; 3 = very interested)

Political Socialization:

- Mother's political activity when respondent was age 16 (0=not active; 2=very active)
- Father's political activity when respondent was age 16 (0=not active; 2=very active)
- Political discussion at home when respondent was age 16 (0=almost never; 2=frequent)
- Parents' education (6-item scale for mother's and father's highest education completed)

Entry of Variables. The direct entry method is used in the initial data analysis, to identify the role of each predictor variable in explaining certified social workers' political participation. The forward entry regression method is used to develop a parsimonious

model, using only statistically significant variables to predict political participation. In forward entry, the computer determines the order of entry of the variables, based on the goodness of fit for each variable in adding to the predictive power of the model, an F value less than or equal to 0.05.

Each of the predictor variables consists of one or more separate scales (Table 3-5). The results of the regression analysis indicate which scales (e.g., sociopolitical control score, political ideology, etc.) or values (annual family income, number of children under the age of 5 years, etc.) are significant predictors of political participation.

Table 3-5. Direct entry of variables in ordinary least squares regression.

Variable	Range of Values
Political Engagement	
Sociopolitical Control Score	17 to 102
Political Interest	0 to 3
Recruitment to Political Participation	
Recruited by social work organization	0 to 2
Activity in social work organization	0 to 3
Resources for Participation	
Annual family income	Actual income in dollars
Years since MSW	1997 minus year received MSW
Children under age of 5 years	Value
Hours worked (in school) per week	Value
Political Socialization	
Father's highest level of school completed	1 to 6
Mother's highest level of school completed	1 to 6
Frequency of Mother's political activity at age 16	0 to 2
Frequency of Father's political activity at age 16	0 to 2
Frequency of political discussions at home at age 16	0 to 2

The model of political participation based on social learning theory suggests a positive relationship between sense of political engagement (predictor variable 3) and political participation. There are no predictions as to which of the four measures

categorized under "political engagement" will be the strongest predictor. If political engagement is the best predictor of CSW political participation, the model is supported. This could lead social work educators and professional associations to develop interventions and strategies to increase the perceived political engagement of students and practitioners in order to increase their political participation.

Parents' political socialization was included in the analysis to estimate whether certified social workers may be drawn to the field and to political participation in response to exposure to political action. If socialization is a significant predictor of the dependent variable, it may be used as a control variable in future analysis. Furthermore, Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) suggest an interaction for political engagement and participation, such that participation increases perceived engagement which increases participation even further, especially with the performance of higher cost acts. On the other hand, engagement may be of little consequence for low-cost acts such as voting. The items included in each of the predictor variables and the dependent variable will be correlated to determine the strength of the relationship, if any, between items.

Chapter 4 presents detailed results of the data analysis, including the role of the three predictors in explaining differences in the political participation of certified social workers. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of these findings for social work education and practice and offers possible interventions to increase political participation.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CURRENT STUDY

Validity. Campbell and Stanley (1963) used "internal validity" to refer to the causal relationship between two or more variables and "external validity" to indicate the extent to which a relationship can be generalized across different settings or samples. Cook and Campbell (1979) presented a series of threats to validity. These threats, and their possible effect on the current study, are discussed in the following sections.

Low Statistical Power. The probability of a Type II error (incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis) increases with small sample size and a low alpha. The current study sampled 500 certified social workers, using the total design method (Dillman, 1978). Earlier studies of social workers' political participation have used samples of 500 or less, relying on NASW membership lists for names and addresses. A random sample from the registry of more than 32,000 CSWs was provided by the New York State Education Department. The list was not as current as expected, even though CSW certification is renewed every three years in the licensee's birth month and CSWs are required to notify the department of an address change within 30 days. Surveys which were returned due to incorrect addresses were forwarded or the subject replaced with a new name drawn at random. This replacement strategy, coupled with the total design method, provided a sample size of 242 (response rate of 48 percent), which is sufficient for multiple regression analysis.

Construct Validity. The definition of political participation varies depending on the subjects and the perspective of the researcher. Although different acts require different

costs (in time or money), each act of participation allows a citizen to express his or her voice in the political process, by voting, contacting elected officials, or running for office. As noted in Chapter 1, political acts could be arrayed on a hierarchy, with least costly acts at the bottom (Milbrath, 1965).

This hierarchical nature has led some researchers to include only selected items in discussions of participation. For instance, some studies include voting (Woodward & Roper, 1950; Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995; Parker & Sherraden, 1991) while others dismiss voting as a low-cost activity and, therefore, not indicative of political participation (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991 & 1993). Yet, in 1994, the incumbent Democrat in New York's 26th Congressional District was re-elected by a margin of less than 200 votes. NASW PACE endorsed the incumbent and, if as suggested by Parker and Sherraden, more than 75 percent of NASW members vote in off-year elections, the 450 NASW members in the 26th Congressional District could have provided the incumbent's margin of victory. Social workers voted at a higher rate than the public in 1984 and 1988 (Parker & Sherraden, 1991); this study is the first comparison of social workers' voting in 1996, when the general turnout was less than 50 percent.

Self-reported voting may also be problematic, since respondents over-report voting behavior with rates inflated almost 10 percent compared to actual voter turnout (Strate, Parrish, Elder, & Ford, 1989). Persons with more years of education are less likely to over-report (Guth & Green, 1979) and, since the sample consists of individuals with graduate degrees, accurate responses may be increased.

Reliability of Measures. There is a vast political science literature related to political participation, including the series of American National Election Studies (ANES) conducted by the University of Michigan since the 1940s (Miller & Traugott, 1979) and the recent citizen participation study (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The political science studies have refined questions used to measure political participation. Earlier studies of social workers' political participation (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991) used questions similar to those in the ANES. The questions in the current study are taken from these proven measures of participation (i.e., voting, campaigning, contacting elected officials, membership in groups that take a stand on public issues, and contributing money).

The Citizen Participation Study (CPS) was conducted with in-person interviews, lasting up to 2 hours, and utilizing open-ended questions and probes (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995). The researchers discussed differences in results from their questionnaire compared to the results of earlier ANES surveys, particularly over-reporting in the areas of contributions, campaign activities, and voting. They suggested that the wording of their instrument more explicitly addressed specific acts and time-frames, yielding more reliable results. No other administration of the CPS has been reported. The CPS was more comprehensive than the current study, which was conducted by mail; still, the reliability of the measures should be similar.

The items which collect demographic information (i.e., social work practice setting, annual income, ethnicity, etc.) are taken from the NASW membership application.

Although the NASW membership was not sampled, that database provides the only available picture of professional social workers (Gibelman & Schervish, 1997). It would be preferable to compare respondents to a demographic analysis of the total population of certified social workers, but the Education department does not report demographic information. There are likely to be differences between NASW members and the CSW but the type and extent of these differences are unknown; the NASW database provides the only demographic information on a large population of professional social workers in New York.

Covariance. Cook and Campbell (1979) noted the importance of controlling the effect of other variables that are related to the dependent variable. In the current study, political socialization, which describes the process by which individuals learn political participation and activity, may be related to the dependent variable and to the predictor variable of political engagement. In order to control for political socialization, the study included 5 items from the citizen participation study (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) to approximate the political socialization of respondents at the age of 16. As noted in Chapter 2, political interest and patterns of participation are often established by that age, although they can increase or decrease throughout life. Collecting information on political socialization allows for controlling that variable and could indicate the role of the three predictor variables on the dependent variable, independent of political socialization.

Socioeconomic status has been a primary explanation of political participation in the U.S. and in other countries (Verba & Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Collecting demographic information on variables related to socioeconomic status (e.g., age, income, education) will allow the effect of these items to be held constant during the data analysis.

Other Threats to Internal Validity. Cook and Campbell (1979) presented other threats, including history, maturation, testing, selection, intervention and statistical regression. These threats, however, are more likely to apply in studies with pre- and post-tests; applications of treatments or interventions; or longitudinal studies. The current study provides a snapshot of political participation in the 1995-1997 period and, therefore, these threats are less relevant to the study.

External Validity. The definition of "social worker" is established in state laws, but there is wide variance among the 50 states in the qualifications for use of the title and practice of the profession (DeAngelis, NASW, 1994), making it nearly impossible to compare "social workers" on any attribute across a number of the states or the nation. In order to generalize to the larger population of social workers, researchers have used the NASW membership data base (Wolk, 1981; Parker & Sherraden, 1991).

However, membership in professional associations is related to political participation (Knoke, 1982), and sampling NASW members does not allow the effect of membership to be estimated in explanations of political participation. Furthermore, social workers who belong to different professional social work associations express different values and beliefs regarding the profession (Pharis, 1987) and, therefore, may have different perceptions of the need for, and frequencies of, political participation.

A certified social worker in New York must hold an MSW degree, pass a standard, written examination, and pay triennial fees (New York State Education Dept., 1995). New York provides title protection for use of the title "certified social worker," without restricting the practice of social work, therefore anyone--regardless of education or experience--may refer to herself or himself as a "social worker" and claim to provide social work services. The CSW is required for practice in hospitals and schools and is a prerequisite for third-party reimbursement for psychotherapy (vendorship). There are more than 32,000 CSWs in New York, compared to 22,000 NASW members, although the total number of MSW-level practitioners is probably greater than 32,000. The only way to determine the overlap between CSW and NASW membership lists is through a tedious and labor-intensive manual comparison of printed rosters.

As noted above, the only demographic statistics for social workers in New York (e.g., social work practice method, gender, ethnicity, etc.) are drawn from the NASW database. The gender of most subjects, selected at random from the entire CSW list, may be evident from names, although this method is neither scientific nor certain. It is likely that summary demographics of respondents will be similar to the characteristics of NASW members. Although predictions based on this study are limited to the population of certified social workers, if there are sufficient similarities between respondents and NASW members, it is possible to infer that models of participation apply to the broader population of MSW practitioners.

New York neither certifies nor licenses practitioners with a bachelor of social work (BSW) degree. There are no means available to identify a sample BSW practitioners to measure their political participation. It is not possible to sample NASW members with the BSW, since they comprise only 0.08% of New York State chapter members. The sample of CSWs may include some persons without degrees in social work who were "grandfathered" into the profession in 1965 when the certification law was enacted. More than 30 years have passed since certification began, and the number of grandfathered practitioners who are active presently in the profession is likely to be minuscule.

Chapter 4
Data Analysis

The goals of this research are to: 1) determine the amount and type of political activity by Certified Social Workers in New York; and, 2) identify factors which may predict higher levels of political activity. The identification of these predictors is critical to the development of interventions to increase participation, especially the performance of more "costly" events, such as campaigning, presenting testimony and meeting with government officials.

This chapter presents a description of the respondents' characteristics (i.e., demographics); tests the 17 hypotheses presented in Chapter 3; and provides the results of regression analyses, utilizing the predictors of resources, recruitment, political engagement, and political socialization to explain political participation. The implications of these findings and recommendations for further research will be presented in Chapter 5.

Data Collection and Analysis. The total design method (Dillman, 1978) was utilized, with three mailings to a sample of 500 certified social workers, beginning September 1, 1997. Subjects who had moved and left no forwarding address were replaced with names drawn from an additional pool of 100 certified social workers. Those who returned the postage-paid card asking to be excluded from the survey were not

replaced. A total of 244 surveys were returned by December 1, 1997; two of these were totally blank, yielding a usable sample of 242 from the sample of 500 (48 percent). Another 10 surveys were returned after the completion of data analysis; these responses were not included in the current study, but will be included in future reports.

The returned surveys were coded by the researcher and the data was entered and analyzed using SPSS. Due to incomplete or missing information, the number of responses included in the analysis varies by item, ranging from a maximum of 242 to a minimum of 151 in the regression analysis. Listwise missing-value treatment is used in all analyses, utilizing only those cases with valid data on all the variables of interest. The pairwise option for missing values was considered, using available data for each pair of variables in the equation, rather than deleting the case from the regression. Although the pairwise option generated a larger sample size for analysis, its use may introduce error into the regression (Norusis, 1987). Furthermore, a comparison of the two options demonstrated that less significant results were obtained, although a larger sample size was used with the pairwise option.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Table 4-1 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of the sample. The respondents were overwhelmingly female (80 percent) and white (80 percent). Table 4-1 compares respondents with data on national NASW members (Gibelman & Schervish, 1997). NASW membership data is used since the Education Department,

which provided the sample of certified social workers, does not report summary demographics.

Respondents' age was calculated by subtracting the year of birth from 1997. Ages ranged from 25 (n=2) to 93 (n=1) years, with a mean of 47.5 years and a median of 47

Table 4-1. Selected demographics of the sample, compared to NASW members.

Variable (Total respondents completing)	*Responses*	*Percent of Responses*	*NASW 1995*
Gender (N=238)			
Male	46	19.3	20.6
Female	192	80.7	79.4
Ethnicity/Race (N=238)			
American Indian	1	0.4	0.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	8	3.4	1.8
Black (not Hispanic)	15	6.3	5.7
Hispanic	14	5.9	2.8
White (not Hispanic)	190	79.8	87.9
Other	10	4.2	0.1
Marital Status (N=238)			
Not married	80	33.6	N/A
Married or domestic partnership	158	66.4	N/A
Children Under 5 Years of Age (N=228)			
None	194	85.1	N/A
One	27	11.8	N/A
Two or more	7	3.0	N/A
Home ZIP Code (N=207)			
Outside New York State	12	5.8	N/A
New York City	71	34.3	N/A
Long Island	63	30.4	N/A
Upstate New York	61	29.5	N/A

years (N=217). Respondents were asked to provide total family income in 1996. The responses ranged from 0 (N=5) to $500,000 (N=2), with a mean of $76,727 and a median of $70,000 (N=215).

Two-thirds of all respondents were married or in a domestic partnership; 16 percent had never married and 17 percent were not married when the survey was conducted.

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) reported that individuals with small children are less likely to be politically active. Only 15 percent of the respondents in this study had children under the age of 5 years.

Putnam (1993) and Elazar (1972) reported differences in respondents' civic participation, including contacting elected officials, based on the region in which the respondent lives. Subjects were asked to provide their home ZIP code to identify their community of residence. This method was chosen instead of reviewing postmarks on returned surveys, since the postmark indicates where the survey was **mailed** (and therefore, could be the town in which the respondent lives, or works, or with a convenient mail box).

New York is conceptually divided into three regions: Long Island, New York City, and "upstate." The respondents (N=207) were divided almost equally: 34 percent in New York City, 30 percent in Long Island, and 29 percent in upstate New York. An additional 8 percent of the sample lived outside New York state.

Social Work Demographics. Table 4-2 provides information on the social work education and practice of the respondents. Respondents indicated the year in which they received the MSW degree, with responses ranging from 1947 through 1996. Three-quarters of respondents received their degree in the last 20 years and 30 percent had received the MSW after 1990.

Table 4-2. Social work demographics of the sample.

Variable (Total respondents)	Number	Percent
Concentration in MSW Program (N=206)		
Micropractice	68	33.0
Macropractice	24	11.7
Generalist	89	43.2
None	25	12.1
Decade in Which MSW Received (N=240)		
1990 or later	83	39.0
1980 through 1989	61	29.0
1970 through 1979	53	25.0
Prior to 1970	16	7.0
Current Employment (N=238)		
Employed full-time	184	77.3
Employed part-time	29	12.2
Retired	12	5.0
Full-time student	1	0.4
Searching for a job	3	1.3
Not working now	9	3.8
Employer Funding Source/Auspices (N=192)		
Private	123	64.1
Government	33	17.2
Self-Employed	36	18.8
Social Work Employment Setting (N=226)		
Business/Industry	2	0.9
College/University	8	3.5
Court/Justice system	3	1.3
Health (inpatient)	15	6.6
Health (outpatient)	5	2.2
Managed care	3	1.3
Mental health (inpatient)	9	4.0
Mental health (outpatient)	54	23.9
Private practice (group)	3	1.3
Private practice (solo)	32	14.2
Residential facility	11	4.9
School (pre-K to grade 12)	32	14.2
Social service agency	25	11.1
Public assistance/welfare	1	0.4
Other	23	10.2
Social Work Job Function (N=223)		
Administration	41	18.4
Clinical/direct practice	152	68.2
Community organization	1	0.4
Teaching	6	2.7
Training (agency)	2	0.9
Other	21	9.4

Individuals were asked to identify their concentration in the MSW program. The choices of "micropractice," "macropractice" and "generalist" reflect the current terminology in social work education (CSWE, 1995). However, 12 percent of respondents indicated "none" and 15 percent of respondents wrote in another answer, suggesting possible confusion among respondents about the choices offered.

Employment. More than three in four respondents (77 percent) were employed full time; an additional 12 percent were employed part time. There were 21 respondents (8.8 percent) retired or not working, four respondents were searching for a job and one was a full-time student. Respondents spent an average of 36.7 hours per week in work or school. Of those responding (N=192), 123 (55 percent) were employed in the private sector, either in a for-profit (N=27) or not-for-profit agency (N=96). Thirty-three respondents (17 percent) were employed by the government (federal, state or local), and 36 were self-employed.

Job Function. More than 2 out of 3 respondents described their job function as direct or clinical practice (67.6 percent). The second largest function was administration (18.2 percent) and teaching was a distant third (2.7 percent). All other categories tallied less than 1 percent of respondents each, with 17 surveys blank.

Employment Setting. Overall, respondents worked in mental health (27.9 percent), private practice (15.5 percent), school (14.2 percent), social service agency (11.1

percent), and health (8.8 percent). Slightly more than 10 percent of respondents identified their work setting as "other."

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

The initial goal of the current study was to identify the political activities performed by certified social workers in New York. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they engaged in targeted behaviors and, in some cases, what subject was addressed, e.g., in letters to elected officials or in oral testimony. Table 4-3 lists the targeted behaviors, the predicted frequency with which each is performed, how often the sample of certified social workers perform the targeted activity, and whether the hypothesis is confirmed or rejected.

Table 4-3. Hypotheses testing of six targeted political activities indicate that certified social workers are more active than projected.

No.	Targeted Activity	Prediction	Actual	Hypothesis test
1	Voting in 1996 election	less than 93%	92%	Reject
2	Work for candidate's election	less than 10%	13%	Reject
3	Donate money to candidate/party	less than 25%	36%	Reject
4	Contact government officials	more than 75%	60%	Reject
5	Present oral testimony	less than 5%	3%	Confirm
6	Attend rally or demonstration	less than 5%	25%	Reject

Voting in 1996. Parker and Sherraden (1992) reported that 93 percent of NASW members voted in the 1988 presidential election. Ninety-two percent of certified social workers in New York reported voting in the 1996 presidential election, when the

candidates were Bill Clinton and Bob Dole. This rate is not significantly different from that reported by Parker and Sherraden.

Social workers vote at a much higher rate than the general public. In 1988, the voting rate of the general public was 57.4 percent; in 1996, the public's rate was 49.8 percent (Federal Election Commission website, 1998). In New York state, only 47.5 percent of the eligible voters participated in the 1996 election; this was the lowest presidential election turnout in New York during the period 1960 through 1996 (New York State Board of Elections website, January 23, 1998). Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) reported 71 percent of respondents to the Citizen Participation Study voted in 1988.

Campaign Activity. Parker and Sherraden (1992) had reported that 12 percent of NASW members worked for a candidates' election in the 1988 election; they were not clear how many years were included in this period. Ezell (1991), in a study of NASW members and University of Washington MSW graduates who did not belong to NASW, reported that 27 percent of respondents had volunteered in a campaign in the previous four years. Ezell, who compared social workers' participation in various activities in 1981 and 1989, cited Wolk (1981) who reported that 30 percent of Michigan social workers had campaigned in the previous four years. For purposes of comparison, only 8 percent of the public volunteered in campaigns (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). In the current study, 13 percent of CSWs volunteered for a candidate's election campaign in the previous two years.

Campaign Contributions. Ezell (1991) reported that 45 percent of social workers donated money to a candidate or political party in the previous two years; Parker and Sherraden (1992) stated that 58 percent of NASW members had contributed. Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) reported that 23 percent of respondents donated to campaigns or candidates. In the current study, 36 percent of respondents gave money to a candidate, political committee or political party in the previous two years. Of the 85 respondents who donated money, 80 indicated the amount contributed. The total contributions were $12,762, ranging from a low of $2 and a high of $1,500; the mean of all contributions was $159 and the median was $87.50.

More than two-thirds of all respondents were NASW members, and there may be an effect of NASW membership on campaign contributions. NASW membership renewals include a "negative check-off" for contributions to the Association's political action committee (PACE). Wolk (1981) had excluded social workers' contributions to the NASW political action committee (PACE), as well as the federal income tax return check-off. Ezell (1993) and Parker and Sherraden (1991) suggested that NASW members contributed to candidates through PACE. Chi-square analysis (Figure 4-1) indicated that there is a relationship between NASW membership and contributions to campaigns (chi square=4.54, df=1, p=.03), although the relationship is mild (phi = .14).

Figure 4-1. There is a mild relationship (phi=14) between NASW membership and contributing money to a candidate or campaign in the past 2 years.

			Contribute Money		
			No	Yes	Total
NASW member	No	Count	60	22	82
		% in member	73.2%	26.8%	100%
	Yes	Count	93	64	157
		% in member	59.2%	40.8%	100%
Total		Count	153	86	239
		% of total	64.0%	36.0%	100%

Contact Government Official. In the past two years, 60 percent of the respondents have contacted a government official by phone, fax, letter, or e-mail. This far exceeds the rate of 24 percent reported by Verba, et al. (1995) but is less than the 89 percent reported by Ezell (1993). Social workers' political activity increases in response to perceived threats to social programs (Cloward, 1991) and at the time of the current study, the federal and state governments were debating welfare reform. Ezell suggested that at the end of the Reagan presidency social workers were more politically active, although he did not identify specific issues which could explain the high rate for contacting government officials.

Although the role of professional social work associations in mobilizing social workers is discussed later in this chapter, there is a mild effect of NASW membership on contacting government officials (Figure 4-2). As was the case with campaign contributions, chi-square analysis indicates that certified social workers who contacted government officials were more likely to belong to NASW (5.477, df=1, p=.02).

Figure 4-2. There is a mild relationship (phi = .15) between NASW membership and contacting government officials by phone, mail, e-mail, or fax.

			Contact an official		
			No	Yes	Total
NASW member	No	Count	41	41	82
		% in member	50.0%	50.0%	100%
	Yes	Count	54	103	157
		% in member	34.4%	65.6%	100%
Total		Count	95	144	239
		% of total	39.7%	60.3%	100%

Present Oral Testimony. One of the more costly activities of political participation in the current study is presenting oral testimony to a government body. The preparation and delivery of testimony requires expertise in the subject area, as well as proficiency in public communications (Barbaro, 1978). It is to be expected that few individuals engage in this activity, yet it provides detailed information about an individual's or association's position on pending legislation or issues.

Ezell (1993) reported that only 5 percent of respondents had presented oral testimony; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) did not include this activity in the Citizen Participation Study. In the current study, only 3 percent of respondents had testified in the previous two years. Failing to provide testimony suggests that government officials are not well-informed about the contributions of social work or the needs of social workers' clients when decisions are made about funding programs and services (Domanski, 1998).

Attend Rally, March or Demonstration. The majority of targeted behaviors in the current study are undertaken by the individual, with little or no outside assistance or prompting. This is not true of rallies, marches, or demonstrations, which are organized as a public message regarding private concerns. Demonstrations may carry high costs, too, requiring time off work or travel to a common site. Neither Ezell (1993) nor Parker and Sherraden (1991) included demonstrations in their studies of political participation; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) reported participation by 6 percent of respondents.

It was expected that fewer than 5 percent of certified social workers would have attended a rally, march or demonstration in the previous two years. Surprisingly, 25 percent of the respondents attended a rally, protest march, or demonstration in the previous two years. Respondents were not asked to indicate the subject of the rally, march or demonstration. However, it is reasonable to suggest that federal and state welfare reform, the proposed elimination of social work departments in hospitals, and rent control in New York City during the last two years may have resulted in the higher participation.

Once again, chi-square analysis confirms a relationship between NASW membership and a specific political activity, in this case, attending a protest, rally, or march (Figure 4-3). The relationship is significant (chi square=6.78, df=1, p=.009).

Figure 4-3. There is a mild (phi = .17) relationship between NASW membership and attending a protest rally, march or demonstration.

			Attend a protest rally		
			No	Yes	Total
NASW member	No	Count	70	12	82
		% in member	85.4%	14.6%	100%
	Yes	Count	110	47	157
		% in row	70.1%	29.9%	100%
Total		Count	180	59	239
		% of total	75.3%	24.7%	100%

Conclusions. The preceding section has reported on certified social workers' performance of six targeted political acts. The results indicate that certified social workers are more politically active than the general public (as defined by Verba, Schlozman, & Brady (1995) and at least as politically active as NASW members, surveyed by Ezell (1993) and Parker & Sherraden (1991)). The following section will present information on the construction and scoring of the Political Participation Scale (PPS), which serves as an indicator of relative political participation.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION SCALE (PPS)

The six targeted acts performed by Certified Social Workers in the preceding section are included in the nine-item political participation scale (PPS). Items included in the PPS and their scoring are indicated in Table 4-4. Each respondent earns a total score on the PPS, ranging from "0" (no participation) to "11" (maximum participation). The PPS was calculated only for those respondents who answered each item in the scale (N=215).

The PPS is similar to indices used by Wolk (1981) and Ezell (1991, 1993) to compare NASW members' political participation and by Woodward and Roper (1950) and Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) to measure the political participation of a public sample. Table 4-4 also reports the frequency with which each activity was performed by the sample of certified social workers. The activities are presented in order from most-frequently to least-frequently performed.

The Political Activity Index developed by Woodward and Roper (1950) included membership in organizations that take a stand on political issues. Political science research has documented a relationship between membership in associations and political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Knoke, 1982). Associations and organizations can provide individuals with information about, and opportunities for, political participation; therefore, this is a factor which may affect the political participation score.

Earlier studies of social workers' political participation surveyed primarily NASW members. The current study sampled individuals who may or may not belong to NASW or another social work association, to determine what effect, if any, membership has on political participation. In order to better estimate the effect of membership in professional social work associations on political participation, membership was not included in the political participation scale for the current study.

Earlier indices of participation have used "cutting scores" to differentiate the inactive, active, and very active respondents. After reviewing the range of scores on the

PPS, *inactive* was defined as those earning 3 or fewer points (6 percent of all respondents); *active* was defined as scores from 4 through 7, inclusive (88 percent); *very active* encompasses scores from 9 through 11 (6 percent). This is consistent with earlier studies (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1991 and 1993), although the definition varies across studies.

Table 4-4. The Political Participation Score (Dependent Variable) is based on the performance of specified political acts; higher scores indicate more participation.

Activity	Score	Frequency	Rank
Voting in 1996 presidential election	1=Yes; 0=No	92.1 % Yes	**1**
Voting in previous presidential elections	2=All or Most; 1 = Rarely; 0=Never	88.8% All/Most; 9.6% Rarely	**2**
Contacting officials: letter/phone/fax/e-mail	1=Yes; 0=No	60.3% Yes	**3**
Discussing politics with family, friends or colleagues	2=Frequently; 1=Rarely; 0=Never	37.1% Freq. 61.3% Rarely	**4**
Making financial contribution to candidate, party or campaign	1=Yes; 0=No	35.6% Yes	**5**
Participate in protest/march/demonstration	1=Yes; 0=No	24.7% Yes	**6**
Contacting officials in person	1=Yes; 0=No	16.9% Yes	**7**
Volunteering in a campaign	1=Yes; 0=No	13.5% Yes	**8**
Testifying before legislative body	1=Yes; 0=No	3.3% Yes	**9**
Maximum Possible score	**11**		

The most frequent score on the PPS was 5, received by 22 percent of respondents; 19 percent earned a score of 6. The lowest score on the PPS was 1 (N=2) and the maximum score was 10 (N=5). The mean PPS score was 5.7, with a standard deviation of 1.73. The median score was 6; the scores were distributed nearly normally (skewness=.069).

Political participation encompasses a range of activities, which may be correlated with each other. Milbrath (1965) arranged 14 political activities in a hierarchical manner, from least-costly to most-costly, suggesting that individuals seek out progressively more costly activities. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) when applied to political

participation, would suggest that the performance of less-costly political activities increases the individual's perception of efficacy and skill, leading to the performance of more costly acts.

The activity performed most frequently by certified social workers was voting in the 1996 presidential election (92 percent). This is similar to earlier reports that more than 90 percent of NASW members voted in the 1984 and 1988 presidential elections (Parker & Sherraden, 1991). The consistency of social workers' voting was confirmed when 89 percent of respondents in this study reported voting in all or most presidential elections; this was the second highest-scored political activity for certified social workers. The third most frequent activity was contacting government officials by phone, fax, e-mail or letter (60 percent). These three activities are lower-cost, in that they require little commitment or time to complete.

The activities least often performed by certified social workers were: testifying before a legislative body (3 percent), volunteering in an election campaign (14 percent), and contacting officials in person (17 percent). These activities are higher in cost, requiring a commitment of time or a level of expertise to complete, yet they also are the activities best suited to communicate to candidates or officials a direct message about social workers and their clients.

The other activities performed by certified social workers included frequently discussing politics with families or friends (37 percent), making financial contributions (36 percent), and participating in a rally, protest march, or demonstration (25 percent).

These may be defined as intermediate cost activities, requiring the investment of some time and the acquisition of some knowledge or expertise about the subject. These activities are relatively anonymous and provide policy-makers with less specific, direct information about social workers or their clients. The PPS indicates that social workers are more active than the general public, but not engaged in the most costly--and therefore the most content-laden--political activities.

The items in the PPS were correlated with each other and the results are shown in Table 4-5. There are significant correlations among 21 of the 36 pairs at the level of p=0.01 or p=0.05 (1-tailed). Contacting a government official is significantly correlated with all other activities. Attending a rally is significantly related to all variables **except** voting in presidential elections and voting in 1996. There are three items with negative correlations, although none is significant: *Voting in 1996* is negatively related with *Discussing Politics* (-.036, p=.298) and with *Meeting with a Government Official* (-.059, p=.197); *Meeting with a Government Official* is also negatively correlated with *Voting in Presidential Elections* (-.006, p=.467).

Although the items in the PPS are similar to those used in the Citizen Participation Survey (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), the items used in the Citizen Participation Study, were all positively correlated, and statistically significant (Cronbach's alpha=.62). The absence of positive, significant correlation of all items in the PPS may lead to questions about the accuracy of the scale. However, Verba's large sample size (N=2,057) could result in significant correlations, even if the relationship was very small. Factor

analysis was applied to items in the Political Participation Scale, generating the correlation matrix in Table 4-5. The determinant was 0.322.

Table 4-5. Correlation of items in Political Participation Scale.

	Vote96	Meeting	Contribute	Testify	Discuss	Volunteer	Elections	Rally
Contact by mail	.206** p=.001	.167** p=.007	.120* p=.039	.159** p=.010	.179** p=.004	.115* p=.046	.145* p=.017	.241** p=.000
Vote in 96 election	1.00	-.059 p=.197	.136* p=.024	.056 p=.208	.-036 p=.298	.066 p=.168	.636** p=.000	.066 p=.246
Meeting with official		1.00	.075 p=.136	.236** p=.000	.204** p=.005	.234** p=.000	-.006 p=.467	.235** p=.000
Contribute money			1.00	.009 p=.449	.204** p=.001	.278** p=.000	.098 p=.077	.204** p=.001
Oral testimony				1.00	.049 p=.237	.059 p=.194	.066 p=.168	.163** p=.008
Political discussion					1.00	.141* p=.019	.057 p=.204	.148* p=.015
Campaign volunteer						1.00	.070 p=.155	.269** p=.000
Presidential elections							1.00	.008 p=.454

** correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed) Listwise N=215

* correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The next section uses the PPS as the dependent variable to examine the relationship between identified predictor variables and political participation. The predictor variables are based on the literature review and previous studies of political participation by social workers and the general public. The predictors fall in three categories: available resources, networks of recruitment, and political engagement.

PREDICTOR ONE: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

There are various factors, including income, age, and education, which have been correlated with increased political participation in the general public. As outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, hypotheses were established regarding likely predictors of social workers' political participation. Pearson correlation was conducted for each of these hypotheses, with a one-tail specification. The relationship was then tested using one-way analysis of variance, using the PPS score as the dependent variable (range 0 to 11). Frequencies were run for each of the independent variables. The variables were then categorized to facilitate analysis of variance. Table 4-6 displays the means for each group on the resource predictors, using one-way ANOVA.

Family Income. There is a correlation (Pearson 0.178, p=0.017) between family income and political participation as measured by the PPS. Annual family income in 1996 ranged from $0 (N=5) to $500,000, (total N=215). The mean income for all respondents is $76,727.51, with standard deviation of $55,610.79; the median income was $70,000. Although individuals with larger family incomes in 1996 scored higher on the measure of political participation, the difference in the means between the lowest income group and the highest was not significant. Political science research has indicated that income is positively related to political participation, but the data analysis failed to confirm an effect of income on participation. Increased financial resources provide social workers the opportunity to contribute financially to candidates and to campaigns, but resources also can make free time available to engage in political activities which require

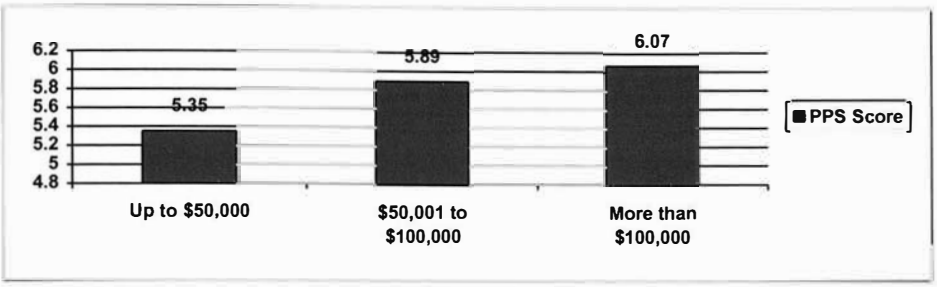
time away from work or home. The relationship between family income (independent variable) and political participation score (dependent variable) is shown in Figure 4-4.

Table 4-6. Available resources affect respondent's political participation.

Variable	N	%	Political Score	Multiple Comp.
Family Income 1996				
Up to $50,000	63	32	5.35	
$50,001 to $100,000	100	52	5.89	-.54 (ns)
More than $100,000	30	16	6.07	-.72 (ns)
Total Income F=2.59 (ns)	*193*	*100*	*5.74*	
Hours per week work/school				
Less than 35 hours	83	42	5.71	
More than 35, less than 45	80	40	5.75	.03 (ns)
More than 45 hours	35	18	5.71	.00 (ns)
Total Hours F=0.01 (ns)	*198*	*100*	*5.73*	
Children Under 5 Years				
No children	173	84	5.90	
One child under 5 years	25	12	5.12	.78 (ns)
More than one child under 5	7	3	4.43	1.47 (ns)
Total Children F=4.37 (p=.014)	*205*	*100*	*5.75*	
Years Since MSW Received				
1990 or later	83	39	5.45	
1980 through 1989	61	29	5.67	-.23 (ns)
1970 through 1979	53	25	5.98	-.54
Prior to 1970	16	7	6.69	-1.24* (p=.05)
Total Years Since F=2.82 (p=.04)	*213*	*100*	*5.74*	

*** difference is significant at the 0.05 level**

Figure 4-4. Although higher income social workers are more active, the data failed to confirm a significant relationship between income and political participation.



Hours Worked Per Week. The respondents were asked to specify the number of hours spent each week on work or in school. There were 221 valid responses, ranging from 0 (N=6) to 88 hours (N=1), with 22 blank responses. The mean is 36.24 hours per week, with a standard deviation of 11.91. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) suggested that individuals with more free time would be more likely to engage in political activity.

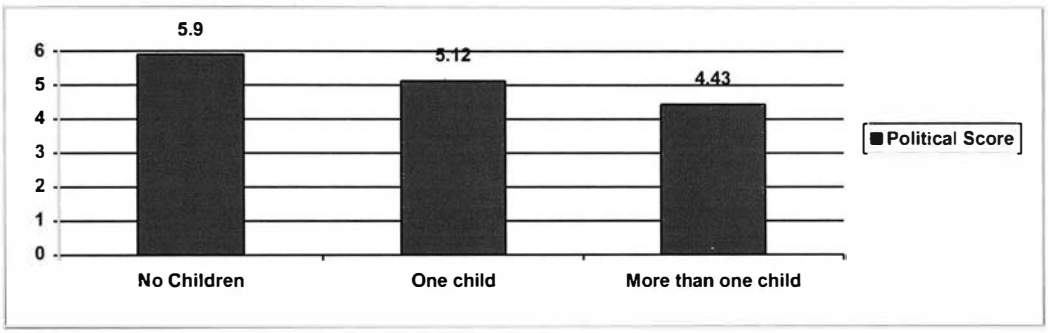
The current study found no relationship between hours worked per week and political participation (Pearson -.005, p=.476). As was the case with the independent variable Family Income, certified social workers who worked or who were in school each week scored higher on the political participation scale, but the differences were not significant (F=.011, p=.989).

Children under 5 years. Respondents were asked to indicate the number of children in the household under the age of 5 years. There were 228 valid responses, with 194 respondents indicating no children under 5 years. Twenty-seven respondents (11.8 percent) had one child; 6 (2.6 percent) had two children; and 1 respondent (0.4 percent) had three children under the age of 5 years. As predicted, there was a negative significant

relationship between the number of children under the age of 5 years and the political participation score (Pearson -0.200, p=.008).

One-way ANOVA confirmed that certified social workers who are most politically active have fewer children under the age of 5 years in the household (F=4.374, p=.01). Figure 4-5 illustrates the negative relationship between children under 5 years and mean score on the political participation scale.

Figure 4-5. There is a significant negative relationship between children under 5 years and political participation by CSWs.



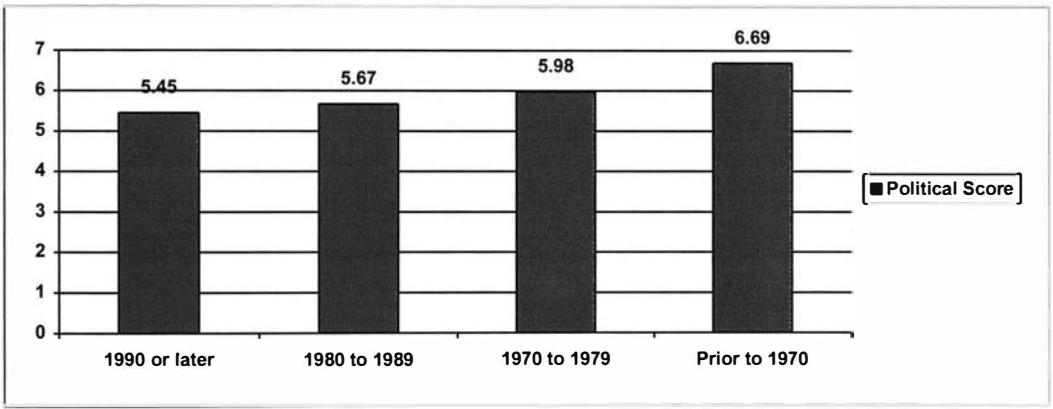
Years Since MSW. Various studies in political science have reported a curvilinear relationship between age and political participation (Woodward & Roper, 1950; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), with participation increasing with through middle age, and declining in the later years. It has been suggested that social work education might enhance the participation of new MSWs (Wagner, 1989); therefore, years since MSW degree is used as a substitute for age.

Respondents were asked to indicate the year in which they received the MSW degree; this number was subtracted from 1997 to provide the value "years since MSW."

The calculated values range from 0 to 50 years, with a mean of 13.50 and a standard deviation of 10.20 years for the 240 respondents. There is a strong positive relationship between years since MSW and political participation score (Pearson .225, p<.0005). This would suggest that certified social workers become more politically active with increased social work experience, rather than declining after an early peak following receipt of the MSW degree.

The relationship between years since the MSW degree and political participation was confirmed by one-way ANOVA (F=2.82, p=.04) and is shown in Figure 4-6.

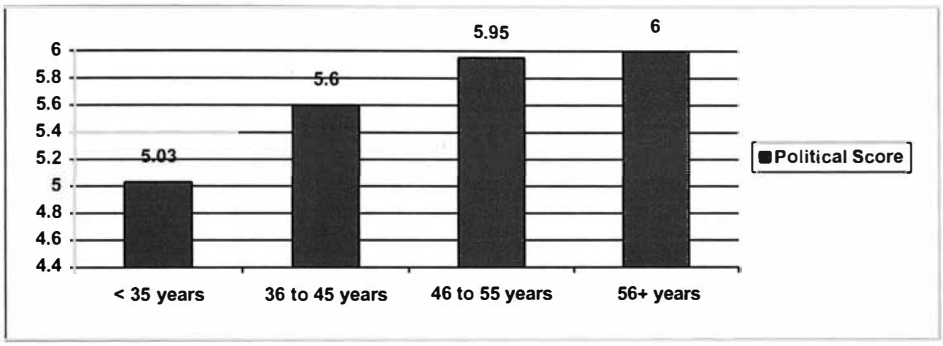
Figure 4-6. Political participation scores are positively related with years since receipt of the MSW degree.



Although age was not included in the predictors of interest, there is a correlation between respondents' age and scores on the political participation scale (Pearson .194, p=.01). One-way analysis of variance confirmed the relationship between age and political participation (F=2.893, p=.036) and is depicted in Figure 4-7. The relationship between age and participation is similar to the relationship between years since MSW and

participation. Political science research has verified that political participation increases with age (Milbrath, 1965; Verba & Nie, 1972). Although Wagner (1989) suggested that social workers' advocacy may peak after graduation, the data indicates that certified social workers' participation increases with age and, therefore, years since receipt of the MSW degree.

Figure 4-7. One-way analysis of variance confirmed the relationship between age and political participation.



PREDICTOR TWO: NETWORKS OF RECRUITMENT

Knoke (1990) and Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) among others have reported a relationship between membership in associations and political participation. Membership provides individuals with information about important issues and presents opportunities to participate. Professional social work associations are similar to the fraternal, religious, and civic organizations included in studies by Knoke and Verba, et al. (1995), in that membership is restricted on the basis of qualifications (e.g., education) and therefore, the membership is more homogeneous than the general population.

Earlier studies of social workers' political participation primarily reported on the activities of NASW members (Ezell, 1991 and 1993; Wolk, 1981; Parker & Sherraden, 1991). Only Ezell (1993) reported any differences in the political participation of NASW members and non-NASW members. The current study asked about membership in the seven major professional social work associations, that is, whether the respondent: 0) did not belong; 1) belonged but was not active; 2) belonged and was active in association activities; or, 3) belonged and held elected or appointed office in the association. Additionally, respondents were asked to identify memberships in other professional social work associations. Table 4-7 shows the ANOVA for predictor two.

Table 4-7. Analysis of variance confirmed the relationship between networks of recruitment and political participation.

Variable	N	%	Political Score	Multiple Comp.
Activity in NASW				
Not a member	60	29	5.20	
Member, not active	134	65	5.95	-.75 (p=.05)
Active member	11	5	6.18	-0.98 (ns)
Hold office in NASW	2	1	8.00	-2.80* (p-.05)
Total Activity F=4.1(p=.007)	*207*	*100*	*5.76*	
Recruited by Association				
Not recruited	78	37	5.29	
Recruited to vote or to activity	91	43	5.91	-0.62 (ns)
Recruited to vote and to activity	44	20	6.23	-0.93* (p=.05)
Total Recruit F=4.92 (p=.008)	*213*	*100*	*5.75*	

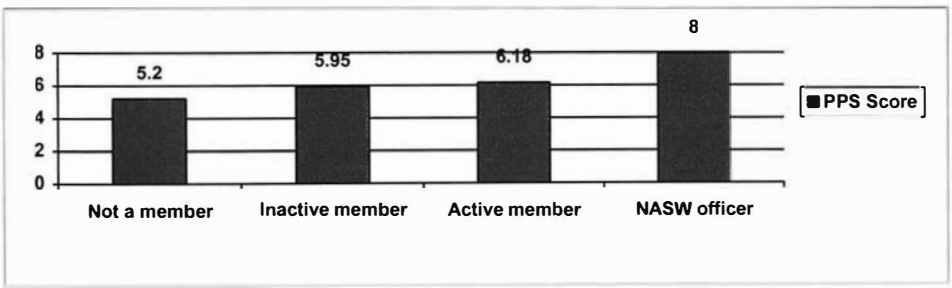
*** difference is significant at the 0.05 level**

NASW Activity. The study originally was planned to examine the effect of membership activity in any professional social work association, focusing on the seven identified in the instrument. Table 4-7 indicates that more than two-thirds of the respondents self-identified as members of NASW. Since the few respondents were

members of other social work associations, membership activity in NASW was substituted for membership in professional social work associations.

Respondents indicated their involvement with NASW as: 1) not a member (N=60); 2) member (N=134); 3) active member (N=11); and, 4) officer in NASW (N=2). NASW activity was highly correlated with political participation (Pearson=.279, $p<.001$, one tailed). Analysis of variance was conducted with Activity in NASW as the independent variable and the political participation score was the dependent variable (Figure 4-8). The results showed a significant effect for NASW activity on political participation ($F=4.10$, $p=.007$). Although there were only two NASW officers, their mean political participation score was more than 2 points higher than the average score of 60 non-NASW members, and 1 points higher than the mean score of active NASW members.

Figure 4-8. There is a significant relationship between NASW membership and political participation.



The relationship between NASW activity and political participation indicates that, although social workers are more politically active than the general public, among social workers, NASW members are more active than non-NASW members. This confirms the

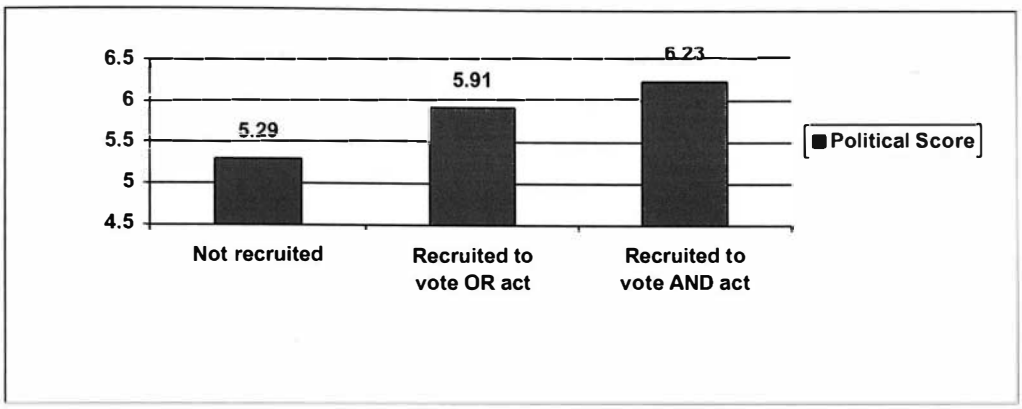
hypothesis that active involvement in professional associations is a significant factor in political participation. NASW activity will be a predictor in the regression analyses, to be discussed later in this chapter.

Recruitment by a Professional Association. Respondents were asked to indicate whether, in the past two years, they had been recruited by a social work association to 1) vote for or against a certain candidate and 2) engage in another political activity (e.g., writing a letter or attending a rally). Twenty-eight percent of respondents had been recruited to vote and 55 percent had been recruited to perform other political activities.

These items were combined to create a single score for social work action at the request of a professional association. Individuals who were not recruited are scored 0 (37 percent of respondents); those recruited to vote **OR** to engage in other acts are scored 1 (43 percent); and those recruited to vote **AND** to engage in other acts are scored 2 (21 percent). There were a total of 234 respondents.

There is a positive correlation between recruitment and political participation (Pearson .291, $p<.001$, one-tailed). Analysis of variance was used, with recruitment as the independent variable, to determine any differences in the mean political participation scores ($F=4.924$, $p=.008$). The relationship between recruitment and political participation is shown in Figure 4-9.

Figure 4-9. CSWs recruited by a social work association score higher on the political participation scale.



PREDICTOR THREE: PERCEIVED POLITICAL EFFICACY

Psychological variables, including perceived effectiveness in the performance of political activities, have been related with increased participation (Conway, 1991; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). An individual's perceived political effectiveness could reinforce his or her decision to engage in additional political activities or to attempt more costly activities. A model of political participation based on Bandura's social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) would suggest that increasing individuals' perceived efficacy would lead to increased performance of targeted activities (e.g., testifying, meeting with elected officials).

The following section presents the results of data analysis of variables related to perceived political engagement or efficacy. Table 4-8 presents the political participation score (dependent variable) by categories of political efficacy variables.

Table 4-8. Analysis of variance confirmed the relationship between perceived political engagement and scores on the political participation scale.

Variable	N	%	Political Score	Multiple Comp.
Sociopolitical Control Score				
Low score (40-67)	50	25	4.90	
Medium Score (68-80)	103	50	5.67	-.77* (p=.05)
High Score (81-100)	51	25	6.65	-1.75* (p=.05)
Total SPSC F=14.82 (p<.001)	*204*	*100*	*5.73*	
Political Partisanship				
Not a strong partisan	102	48	5.41	N/A
Strong Democrat or Republican	113	52	6.04	N/A
Total Partisan F=7.16 (p=.008)	*215*	*100*	*5.74*	
Political Ideology				
Liberal	73	38	6.30	
Moderate	114	60	5.41	.89* (p=.05)
Conservative	3	2	5.33	.97
Total Ideology F=6.47(p=.002)	*190*	*100*	*5.75*	
Strong Political Ideology				
Not a strong ideologue	164	87	5.59	N/A
Strong liberal or conservative	26	13	6.77	N/A
Total Ideology F=11.25 (p=.001)	*190*	*100*	*5.75*	
Political Interest				
Slight/not interested	50	23	4.66	
Somewhat interested	98	46	5.73	-1.07* (p=.05)
Very interested	66	31	6.53	-1.87* (p=.05)
Total Interest F=19.56 (p<.001)	*214*	*100*	*5.73*	

*** difference is significant at the 0.05 level**

Sociopolitical Control Scale. The Sociopolitical Control Scale is a measure of political engagement, with subscales for efficacy and sense of policy control. Scores on the SPSC range from 17 to 102, with higher scores indicating greater perceived political efficacy and sense of policy control. There were 224 valid responses to the SPSC (questions 1 through 17 of the instrument), ranging from 40 through 100.

There is a strong positive relationship between perceived efficacy, as measured by the SPSC, and political participation, as defined by the PPS (Pearson .373, p<.001, one-tailed). Scores on the SPSC were categorized into "low" (40 through 67), "medium" (68 through 80), and "high" (81 through 100). These categories were used as the independent variable for analysis of variance, using the Political Participation Score as the dependent variable.

As predicted, individuals who are defined as more active on the political participation scale also view themselves as having greater control of the policy making process, as measured by the SPSC (F=14.820, p<.001). This suggests that political engagement serves to reinforce individuals' participation in political activities, as they engage in more frequent or more costly political activities.

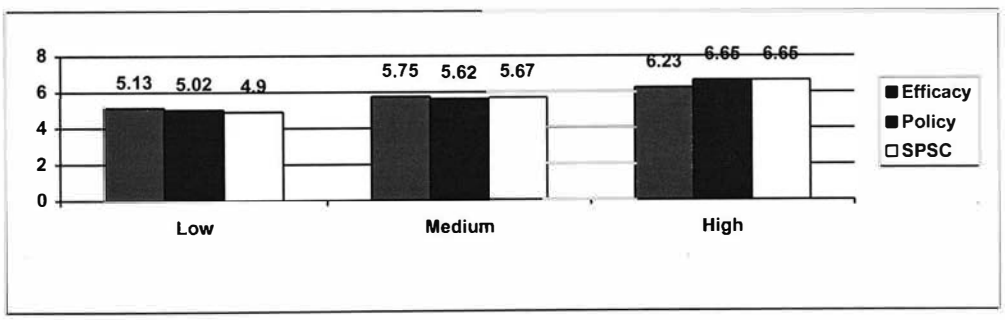
The SPSC consists of subscales, which measure policy control and political efficacy. The subscales were divided into three categories (low, medium, and high), as had been done with the overall score on the SPSC. These subscales were used as independent variables for analysis of variance, to determine whether there were differences in the average score on the political participation scale. There were significant differences between the low, medium and high efficacy groups (F=6.15, p=.008) and scores on the PPS; there were significant differences between the three policy control groups (F=14.36, p<.001) and the PPS. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4-9; the relationships are shown graphically in Figure 4-10.

Table 4-9. Sociopolitical Control Scale Subscales reflect the relationship between policy control and efficacy with political participation scores.

Variable	N	%	Political Score	Multiple Comp.
SPSC Efficacy Subscale				
Low efficacy (20-32)	54	26	5.13	
Medium efficacy (33-37)	88	42	5.75	-.62
High efficacy (38-47)	66	32	6.23	-1.10* (p=.05)
Total Efficacy F=6.15 (p=.003)	*208*	*100*	*5.74*	
Policy Control Subscale				
Low policy control (15-35)	55	27	5.02	
Moderate policy control (36-42)	100	48	5.62	-.60
High policy control (43-54)	54	26	6.65	-1.63* (p=.05)
Total Policy F=14.36 (p<.001)	*209*	*100*	*5.73*	

*** difference is significant at the 0.05 level**

Figure 4-10. Differences in political participation score are consistent across the efficacy subscale, policy control subscale, and the total Sociopolitical Control Score.



Political Identification. Respondents were asked to indicate the political party which they identify with and whether they are "liberal," "moderate" or "conservative" using a 7-point Likert scale. Table 4-10 presents the results of these self-identified labels. Although there is individual variation in the definition of labels, such as "liberal" or "conservative,"

political science research has found that individuals who strongly identify with a political party or with an ideology are more likely to participate in the political process (Conway, 1991). The inclusion of these items, therefore, may help discriminate among certified social workers regarding the amount or type of political participation.

Table 4-10. Respondents' self-identified political party affiliation and ideology.

Political affiliation (N=234)	**Count**	**% of sample**
Strong Democrat	119	50.9
Weak Democrat	18	7.7
Democratic leaner	32	13.7
TOTAL Democrats	*169*	*72.2*
Independent	*33*	*14.1*
Strong Republican	6	2.6
Weak Republican	4	1.7
Republican leaner	8	3.4
TOTAL Republicans	*18*	*7.7*
No affiliation	*14*	*6.0*
Political Ideology (N=211)		
Liberal (Categories 1-2)	79	37.4
Moderate (Categories 3-5)	127	60.2
Conservative (Categories 6-7)	5	2.1

Partisan Strength. Respondents were asked to identify their political affiliation. Research (Dempsey, 1996) has indicated that more than 90 percent of NASW members are Democrats. The responses indicate that 72 percent of the current sample (N=153) self-identify as Democrats. Analysis of variance found no difference in the political participation of certified social workers on the basis of identification with a political party ($F=1.01$, $p=.362$).

However, political science research has reported that persons who strongly identify with a political party—either Democrat or Republican—are more likely to vote and engage in other political activities. The data was categorized so that strong Democrats

and strong Republicans were grouped together and scored "1" (52 of respondents) and all other respondents were categorized as "not partisan" and scored "0" (48 percent). There is a significant relationship between political partisanship and political participation (Pearson .180, p=.004, one-tailed). Analysis of variance was performed using two groups—strong partisan and not partisan—and there were significant differences in the political participation scores (F=7.156, p=.008). For purposes of this analysis, independent was not included as a partisan, although in New York, one can belong to the *Independence* party.

Political Ideology. Persons who self-identify with a political ideology (e.g., conservative, moderate or liberal) think of themselves in political terms; those with a strong sense of political ideology are more politically active (Conway, 1991). In the current study, respondents used a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 signifying extremely liberal, 4 indicating moderate, and 7 marking extremely conservative. There were 211 valid responses to this item; several respondents marked multiple points or intermediate points on the Likert scale.

Data analysis confirmed a relationship between political ideology and political participation (Pearson -.248, p<.001). Although the correlation was negative, political participation is a nominal variable; the choices were arranged as liberal, moderate, and conservative. Analysis of variance confirmed differences in the mean political participation score of persons identifying as "liberal," "moderate" or "conservative" (F=6.47, p<.002) (Table 4-8).

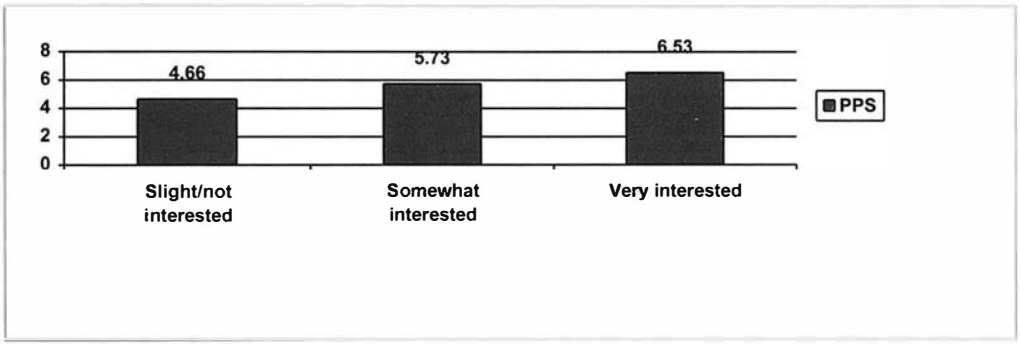
Similar to the procedure used to designate strong partisans, the certified social workers self-identifying as extremely liberal or extremely conservative were coded "1" (n=27); all others were coded "0" (n=184). Correlation analysis confirmed a positive relationship between strong partisans and political participation scores (Pearson .238, p<.001). An analysis of variance was then performed, with political participation score as the dependent variable. The relationship between Strong Ideology and political participation was confirmed (F=11.25, p=.001) (Table 4-8).

Political Interest. A model based on social learning theory would suggest that individuals who are interested in political affairs are more likely to engage in political action. Respondents indicated their interest in politics and public affairs (N=239): 13 were not at all interested (5 percent); 45 were slightly interested (19 percent); 108 were somewhat interested (45 percent); and, 73 were very interested (31 percent). As predicted, there is a strong positive relationship between interest in politics and public affairs and political participation (Pearson .341, p<.001, one-tailed).

For purposes of the analysis of variance, the categories "not interested" and "slightly interested" were combined (N=50), providing three categories for the analysis of variance. Political interest was then used as the independent variable in an analysis of variance, with political participation as the dependent variable; there was a significant relationship found (F=19.56, p<.001). Multiple comparison analysis confirmed significant differences in the mean political participation scores between the three groups (Figure 4-11).

Although Wolk (1981) had questioned using political interest or discussions in a participation scale, the current study has identified a strong relationship between political interest and political participation. This suggests that political interest is an appropriate variable to distinguish between social workers on a measure of political participation. In fact, higher levels of political interest could motivate individuals to seek out political activities and, therefore, a model based on social learning theory (Bandura, 1972) could guide the development of strategies to increase social workers' political participation, by identifying those individuals interested in politics and public affairs.

Figure 4-11. There is a difference in political participation among CSWs with varying interest in political affairs.



REGRESSION ANALYSIS--PREDICTING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The first goal of this study was to identify the political activities of certified social workers. The second goal was to identify those factors which may predict political participation by CSWs. The use of correlations and analysis of variance determined those that predictors significantly related to political participation: number of children under the

age of 5 years, years since receipt of the MSW degree, membership activity in NASW, recruitment to action by a social work association, political efficacy as measured by the SPSC, political partisanship, political ideology, and interest in politics and public affairs. The variable which were not significantly related to political participation were family income in 1996 and the number of hours worked or in school each week.

Each of these variables, singly, had an effect on political participation by certified social workers. Regression analysis is an appropriate procedure to determine the effect of each variable, while controlling for the effect of other variables. Therefore, regression analysis will accomplish the second goal of the study.

A review of the social work and political science literature identified factors which affect individuals' political participation. The current study conceptualized these factors as falling in one of three predictors: resources for participation (income, available time, number of children, and years since the MSW); networks of recruitment to participation (NASW membership activity and recruitment by a social work association); and, political engagement (perceived political efficacy, political partisanship, political ideology, and political interest). Although family income and hours worked were not significant when analysis of variance was used, since income and free time are frequently identified as predictors of participation in the general population, these will be included in the regression analysis.

A fourth set of predictor variables are those related to political socialization (mother's education, father's education, and when the respondent was 16 years of age,

his/her mother's and father's civic involvement and the frequency of political discussions in the home). Political science research has suggested that adults' political participation is affected by their socialization to political activities and public affairs (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Niemi, Craig, and Mattei, 1991).

Table 4-11. Entry of variables in blocks, ordinary least squares regression.

Variable	Range of Values
Political Socialization (Block 1)	
Father's education	1 to 6
Mother's education	1 to 6
Mother's political activity at age 16	0 to 2
Father's political activity at age 16	0 to 2
Political discussion at age 16	0 to 2
Resources for Participation (Block 2)	
Annual family income	Range $0 to $500,000
Years since MSW	Range 1 to 50
Children under age of 5 years	0 to 3
Hours worked (in school) per week	Range 0 to 88
Political Engagement (Block 3)	
Sociopolitical Control Score	17 to 102
Political Interest	0 to 3
Recruitment to Political Participation (Block 4)	
Recruited by social work organization	0 to 2
Activity in NASW	0 to 3

The variables to be entered in the regression analysis are grouped by blocks, which correspond to the four sets of predictors above. The variables, and the range of values, included in the regression are listed in Table 4-11. The factors are entered in the regression analysis in four blocks, using direct entry; all variables were included in the equation.

The blocks were entered into the regression analysis in several combinations; each generated a model with R=.611 when direct entry was used to enter all variables. However, when **forward** entry was used, the value of R varied with the order in which blocks were entered. Initially, the blocks were entered in the manner identified above (resources, associations, perceived engagement, and political socialization). This sequence generated a model with R=.586.

However, as noted above, socialization at the age of 16 years might affect future political participation. It was decided to enter the socialization block first. This was followed by resources, the strongest predictor of participation in political science literature. Then, since perceived engagement would follow from participation, the engagement block was entered third. The current study was undertaken to determine whether involvement with professional social work associations could be used to explain differences in social workers' political participation, so that associations was the fourth and final block entered. This order, using forward entry, generated a model with R=.592, the highest R-value achieved in all forward entry versions.

The regression analysis deleted missing cases on a listwise basis, so that any case which was missing an answer on one item was deleted from the analysis. The listwise deletion provided a regression analysis based on 151 cases. Although pairwise deletion of cases would have included more cases, with 191 degrees of freedom, the slight increase in predictive power was not worth the increased possibility of error (Norusis, 1990). The results of the initial regression analysis, using direct entry of all variables, are shown in

Table 4-12. The models generated by regression analysis and the analysis of variance are included as Appendix C.

Table 4-12. Direct entry regression provides a model with 13 variables that explains 37 percent of the variation in certified social workers' participation.

Variables in Model 5	B	SE B	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.675	1.080		.625	.533
Father's Education	7.04 E-02	.094	.063	.751	.454
Mother's Education	-.181	.111	-.138	-1.621	.107
Mother's Activity at 16	5.07 E-02	.216	.021	.236	.814
Father's Activity at 16	-5.89 E-02	.216	-.025	-.273	.785
Political discussions at 16	.249	.201	.108	1.236	.218
Total Family Income 1996	1.24 E-06	.000	.044	.610	.543
Hours at work/in school	-8.14 E-03	.011	-.052	-.738	.462
Children under 5 years	-.199	.248	-.057	-.802	.424
Years since MSW received	2.19 E-02	.013	.123	1.667	.098
Sociopolitical Control Score	4.48 E-02	.015	.237	2.908	.004
Interest in political affairs	.454	.170	.210	2.665	.009
Activity in NASW	.486	.207	.165	2.352	.020
Recruited by Association	.554	.171	.234	3.249	.001

Direct Entry. The first block, political socialization, generates Model 1 (R=.350) which explains 12 percent of the variation in the political participation score. The addition of the second block, which includes factors related to resources, increases the predictive power by 6 percent, for a total of R-square of 18 percent (Model 2, R=.424).

The addition of predictors related to perceived political engagement (Model 3) increases R-square by only .112 (Model 3, R=.541). The final block of variables, recruitment by social work associations, increases R-square by 0.08 (Model 4, R=.611). The final model contains all 13 variables, which explain 37 percent of the variation in participation scores. The change in the F ratio is significant from each model to the next.

Analysis of variance indicates that all four models are significant predictors of political participation. Table 4-12 shows the coefficients for each variable in Model 4 (F=10. 98, p=.000).

Forward entry. In an effort to generate a more parsimonious model to predict certified social workers' political participation, the regression analysis was repeated using **forward** entry of the same variables in the same blocks. Although the variables are entered in blocks, forward entry adds to the model only those variables which meet the specified criterion, rather than the complete block of variables. The default criterion for entry of variables (probability of F <=.050) was used. This regression analysis explained 35 percent of variability in political participation, while using six predictors (Table 4-13).

Table 4-13. Forward entry regression provides a model with six variables that explains 35 percent of the variation in certified social workers' participation.

Variables in Model 5	B	SE B	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.136	.992		.137	.891
Discussions at age 16	.284	.173	.123	1.643	.103
Years since MSW received	2.26E-02	.013	.128	1.796	.075
Sociopolitical Control Score	4.40 E-02	.015	.232	2.964	.004
Interest in political affairs	.454	.167	.210	2.709	.008
Recruited by Association	.620	.162	.262	3.832	.000
Activity in NASW	.490	.203	.166	2.419	.017

The first predictor entered into the equation is frequency of political discussions at age 16 (Model 1, R=.319), which by itself explains 10 percent of variation in the participation score. The addition of years since receipt of the MSW degree increases R-square by .027 to explain 13 percent of variation (Model 2, R=.359); this model has more predictive power than all the socialization predictors in the direct entry Model 1. The

third predictor entered by forward entry is score on the Sociopolitical Control Scale (SPSC), increasing R-square by .094 (Model 3, R=.472). Model 4 explains 25 percent of the variation in political participation, by adding interest in political affairs (R=.496). Model 5 includes recruitment by a social work association, increasing the R-square by 0.078 (R=.569). Finally, the sixth model adds membership activity in NASW, increasing the R-square 35 percent (Model 6, R=.592).

Analysis of variance confirms that each model is a significant predictor of political participation. Although the forward regression explains only 35 percent, rather than the 37 percent possible using direct entry, the reduction from 13 predictors to 6 predictors argues for parsimony and simplicity.

CONCLUSIONS

The regression analysis has confirmed the relationship between higher levels of political participation and respondents' perceived political engagement and their involvement with professional social work associations. Chapter 5 will present examples of strategies which utilize these predictors to mobilize social work practitioners and students. The strategies are related to social learning theories which would predict that increasing a social worker's sense of mastery will result in more frequent performance of targeted activities, that is, political participation.

Chapter 5
Discussion and Implications

There were two goals for the current study of certified social workers' political participation. The first goal was to determine the amount and type of social workers' political activity. This was accomplished by collecting information on respondents' performance of specific political tasks (e.g., voting, campaigning, and testifying before a legislative body). The second goal was to determine which factor, or combination of factors, predicts higher levels of political participation. This second goal was achieved by focusing on the role of resources (e.g., money, skills, and time), networks of recruitment (e.g., membership in professional social work associations) and perceived political efficacy (e.g., interest in politics).

This chapter presents a summary of the types of political activities performed by the respondents; explanations for differences in social workers' political participation; the application of social learning theory to increase social workers' political participation; transforming non-participants into participants; and, areas for further research.

Political Activities of Respondents

Political participation describes activities undertaken to influence government policies or to affect the outcome of elections. Political activities include voting; meeting with government officials; contributing money to campaigns, parties and candidates, and discussing politics. Social workers engage in political activity individually and collectively, on behalf of the profession and for their clients.

The current study sampled 500 certified social workers in New York regarding their political participation in the previous two years. There were 242 surveys returned by business-reply mail. The respondents were likely to have: voted in the 1996 presidential election (92%); voted in all or most presidential elections (89%); contacted government officials by phone, letter or e-mail (60%). Respondents were less likely to have frequently discussed politics (37%) or made a financial contribution to a candidate or political party (36%). The respondents were least likely to: participate in a protest (25%); meet in person with government officials (17%); volunteer in an election campaign (13%) and testify before a legislative body (3%).

Every political act carries a "cost" of either time or money required to perform the activity. Although political activities can be arranged in a hierarchy (e.g., Milbrath, 1965), the costs are not absolute; the perceived cost varies in relation to the actor's situation. In the current study, the respondents were more likely than the general public to engage in "low-cost" political activities, such as voting or contacting a government official. When the perceived costs are higher, for example, meeting with a government official or making a financial contribution, the respondents were less likely to have performed the activity. The highest cost political acts, including volunteering in a campaign and testifying before a legislative body, were those performed least-frequently by the respondents.

Comparing Respondents' Political Participation

The previous section reported on the frequency with which respondents engaged in particular political activities, such as voting or contacting government officials. The overall political participation of respondents is measured through the construction of an index (Woodward & Roper, 1950; Wolk, 1981). An index of participation awards points for each activity; summing scores for the performance of all political activities yields an overall score.

In the current study, 9 items were included in the Political Participation Score. Possible scores ranged from 0 to 11, with higher scores indicating greater political participation. The mean participation score of 5.7 was nearly in the middle of the scale. No respondent scored "0" or "11"; the minimum score was "1" (N=2) and the maximum was "10" (N=5).

The participation score makes it possible to differentiate between "inactive" (scores of 0-3), "active" (4-7) and "very active" (8-11) social workers. In the current study, 6% of respondents were "inactive", 88% were "active", and 6% were "very active". These findings indicate that social workers are more active than reported in previous studies (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991).

Explaining Respondents' Political Participation

The Civic Voluntarism Model (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) suggests that predictors such as income, political interest, and association membership, are effective in explaining why Americans **do not** participate in the political process. Previous studies

(Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1993; Parker & Sherraden, 1991) have explained differences in social workers' political participation on the basis of practice method (e.g., micropractice or macropractice) or setting (e.g., welfare, political social work, etc.). The current study explains the differences in social workers' political participation by using predictors based on the Civic Voluntarism Model:

Resources: Annual family income, hours worked or in school each week, number of children under 5 years of age, and years since receipt of the MSW degree;

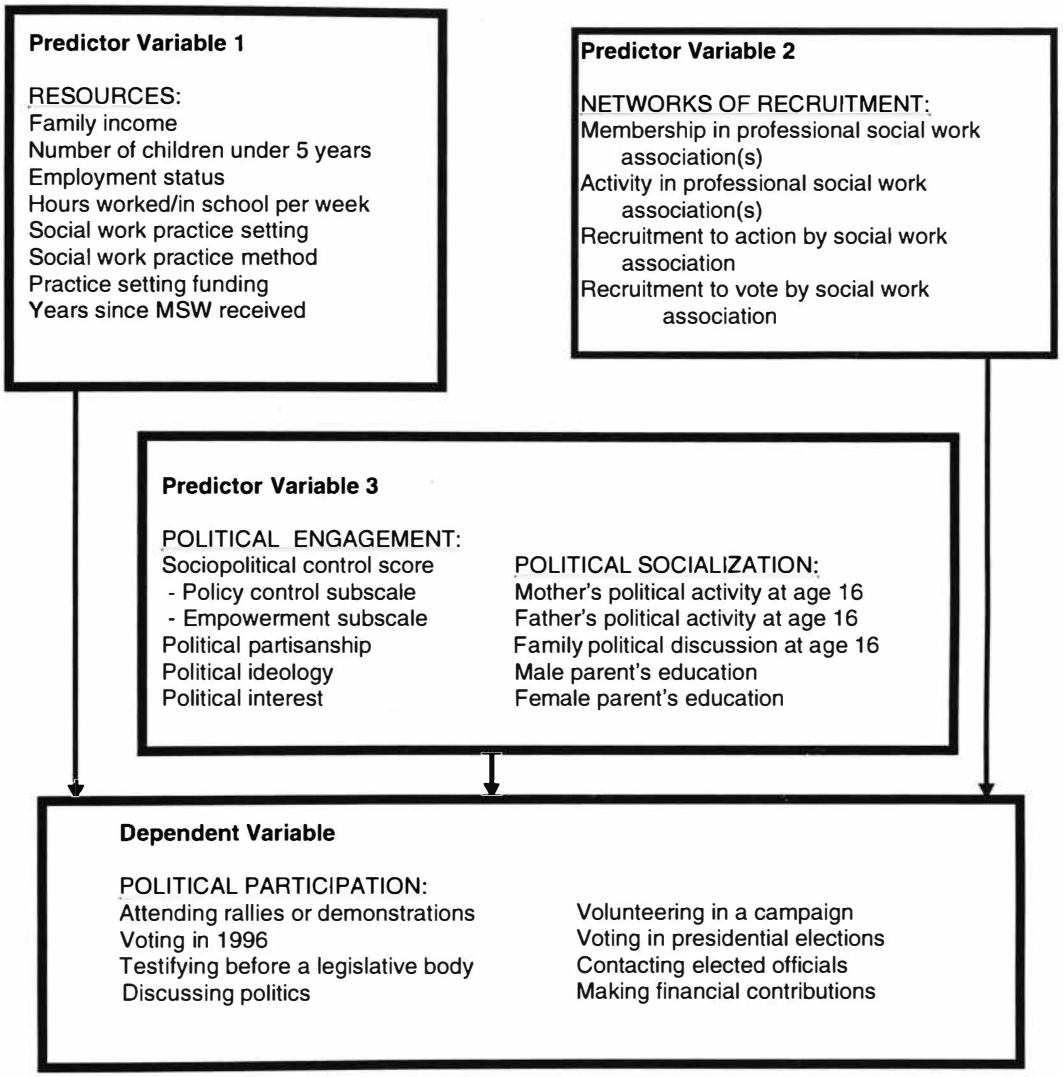
Networks: Membership in NASW and recruitment by a professional association for political or electoral activity;

Political Engagement: Perceived efficacy, political partisanship, political ideology, and interest in public affairs; and,

Political Socialization: Educational achievement of respondent's mother and father, and, when respondent was 16 years old, the political activity of respondent's mother and of the respondents' father, and the frequency of political discussions in the home.

Figure 5-1 illustrates the relationship between the predictors selected from the overall model (Figure 1-4). Several predictors included in Figure 1-4 were deleted from the current study based on the literature review of factors that may differentiate between politically active and inactive social workers.

Figure 5-1. Factors used to predict differences in social workers' participation.



Resources. Socioeconomic factors are frequently used to differentiate between active and inactive citizens (Verba & Nie, 1972; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The strongest of these are income, age, and years of education. The current study, however,

determined that income and education are **not** significant predictors of certified social workers' political participation. Although there was a wide range in respondents' family income in 1996 ($0 to $500,000), regression analysis failed to confirm any effect (p=.543). It was not possible to explore the effect of education, since the population consisted entirely of individuals with the MSW degree. There was a mild effect for age (F=2.893, p=.036), with higher mean political activity scores for older respondents.

There was a significant difference in the mean political participation score of respondents, depending upon the decade in which the MSW was received. Respondents who received the MSW prior to 1970 (N=16), were the most active; the second most active group received their MSW between 1970 and 1979 (N=53). Although regression analysis failed to confirm the predictor "years since receipt of the MSW" as a significant predictor (p=.098), respondents who attended graduate school in the 1960s, due to the turbulent nature of that era, are more active than students from the 1980s and 1990s.

Eighty percent of respondents are female and 80% are white, which is typical of other reports for the composition of the profession (Gibelman & Schervish, 1996). There were no differences in political participation scores on the basis of gender or ethnicity, possibly due to the homogeneity of the sample. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) reported that available free time, marital status, and number of children under the age of 5 years affect an individual's ability to engage in political activities. In the current study, there were no differences in respondents' political participation on the basis of marital status or hours worked per week. Respondents with children under the age of 5 years (N=34) were significantly less active than respondents without children (N=194).

The current study found no significant differences in political participation on the basis of respondents' social work practice setting or job function. This may result from the unique way in which social workers identify themselves and their practice. In the current study, respondents could select from 14 categories of practice settings or specify "other". The most frequently identified settings were outpatient mental health (24%), solo private practice (14%) and school social work (14%). However, 10% of respondents selected "other" to describe their practice setting. There were similar results regarding respondents' social work job functions. Whereas 68% identified their function as Clinical Practice and 18% indicated Administration, 9% of respondents (N=21) selected "other". An accurate estimate of the effect of practice setting or job function on political participation on social workers' political participation would require consistent responses or larger sample sizes.

Professional Associations. Earlier studies of professional social workers' political participation sampled members of NASW and generalized the findings to "social workers" (Wolk, 1981; Parker & Sherraden, 1991). This fails to account for the role of professional associations in training and mobilizing their members for political or electoral activities (e.g., Knoke, 1982). The current study sampled certified social workers, who may belong to one or more professional associations or to none at all.

In the current study, respondents were asked to indicate whether they belonged to each of 7 professional social work associations and, if they belonged, how active they are in that association (defined as member, but not active; active member; and, hold office). Nearly 70% of respondents were NASW members and 13% belonged to the NYS Society

for Clinical Social Work. Fewer than 4% of respondents belonged to each of the other associations. Due to the large number of NASW members responding, membership activity in NASW was substituted for the original predictor of activity in a professional association. Regression analysis confirmed that respondents who belong to NASW are more active than non-members and those who define themselves as "active" in NASW are the most politically active.

Respondents who, in the past 2 years, sent a letter or voted for a particular candidate at the request of a professional social work association were significantly more active than respondents who had **not** been recruited. Furthermore, those who had engaged in both types of activities were the most active respondents. This confirms an important role for professional associations in mobilizing social workers for electoral and political activities.

Perceived Efficacy. An individual's interest in political activity and public affairs was the strongest predictor (beta=0.49, $p<.01$) of participation in the Civic Voluntarism Model (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), but interest in political affairs was not included in earlier studies of social workers' political activity (Wolk, 1981; Ezell, 1993). Similarly, efficacy has been identified as significant predictor among the general population (Niemi, Craig, & Mattei, 1991), but neither Wolk nor Ezell considered the role of political efficacy for explaining differences in social workers' participation. In the current study, respondents' interest in political affairs (beta=.210, p=.009) and perceived political efficacy (beta=.210, p=.004) are significant predictors of political participation, according to regression analysis.

Political Socialization. The Civic Voluntarism Model used political socialization as the starting point to explain why citizens do not participate. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) estimated respondents' political socialization on the basis of the respondent's parents' education and the frequency of political discussions and activities in the home when the respondent was 16 years old. In the current study, regression analysis failed to identify a role for political socialization in explaining differences in the respondents' political participation.

Increasing Political Participation With Social Learning

In the current study, the predictor variables "perceived political efficacy" and "interest in politics" explain 19 percent of the variation in certified social workers' political participation. The significant effect of perceived efficacy on certified social workers' political participation makes social learning theory (Bandura, 1997), with its emphasis on efficacy, an appropriate model for considering strategies to increase social workers' political participation.

Social learning theory has been used to develop interventions which reinforce or eliminate targeted behaviors, including aggression (Bandura, 1978). Social learning theory has been proposed as the basis for experiential learning in social work education, for "teaching social work practice, conducting social work research, analyzing and developing social policy, and guiding the field practicum" (Thyer & Wodarski, 1990, p. 144). Bandura (1978) identified four ways an individual can develop efficacy: performance accomplishment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal.

Performance Accomplishments. Bandura identified performance accomplishment, which includes participant modeling, performance desensitization, performance exposure, and self-instructed performance (p. 195) as the most significant method for developing efficacy. Allowing the actor to engage in the activity, and to experience the rewards or failures which accompany the activity, creates the strongest sense of mastery (Bandura, 1978). Students who were involved in political campaigns (Hull, 1987), organized a lobby day at the state capitol (Hoffman & Yaffe, 1998), and participated in an experiential policy-practice course (Rocha, 1998), engaged in greater political activity in the future and felt more competent about their abilities.

Vicarious Experiences. Direct performance is not the only method by which a targeted behavior can be increased or decreased. Stressful or unfamiliar activities may generate performance anxiety and lead subjects to avoid the activity. Montcalm (1996) reported that social work students expressed "fear" of research classes, suggesting social learning to lessen student anxiety.

Modeling those behaviors which are perceived as "threatening," can help individuals develop belief in their ability to perform the same or similar task (Bandura, 1978). Pairing experienced lobbyists with first-time participants provides the newcomer with an opportunity to observe meetings with elected officials, reducing personal anxiety. (Whittington, 1990).

Verbal Persuasion. Although less effective than performance accomplishment and vicarious experiences, persuasion may be used to develop subjects' mastery of targeted behaviors. However, Bandura (1977) cautioned that verbal persuasion, while simple and

readily available, does not provide levels of mastery or efficacy similar to performance or vicarious experiences. The ethical codes of major social work associations state that social workers should engage in social and political action. The social work literature is replete with exhortations toward political participation (Cohen, 1966; Ribicoff, 1962; Thursz, 1962; Ginsberg, 1984; Heffernan, 1962; Minahan, 1981; Wagner, 1989) but, as Weiner noted, "exhortations tend to produce guilt, but little action" (1964, p. 106).

Emotional Arousal. Stressful situations generate emotional reactions which may inhibit or facilitate an individual's performance of the targeted activity (Bandura, 1978). Many individuals engage in political activities because of a moral or ethical belief, such as one's view regarding abortion or the death penalty (Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995).

Efficacy and Failure. Political participation is not guaranteed to achieve the desired outcome. Failure and setbacks have an effect on individuals' decisions to continue political participation and the development of strategies for continued activity. Bandura (1978) reported that individuals with low efficacy are more likely to surrender in the face of defeat. However, individuals with higher levels of efficacy are likely to continue in spite of rejection or failure, and they attempt to change the system to make it more responsive.

Bandura (1978) also noted that the reinforcing nature of social learning theory creates difficulty in separating "cause" from "effect." This "chicken-or-egg" situation reflects the problems inherent in determining whether efficacious individuals seek out opportunities for participation, or whether an individual's decision to participate develops

efficacy. In fact, both are important to overcome an individual's decision not to participate.

Transforming Non-Participants Into Participants

The current study confirmed that there are differences in the political activity of social workers. Americans do not engage in political activities because "they can't, they don't want to, or no one asked" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Although 88% of respondents in the current study were active, they seldom engaged in high cost activities, such as oral testimony or volunteering in campaigns. Identifying barriers to social workers' political participation could increase the performance of high-cost activities.

They can't participate. Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) suggested that individuals can't participate because they lack time, money or skills. The current study found that family income and hours worked each week failed to predict respondents' participation and failed to differentiate "inactive" from "active" social workers. However, each item in the political participation scale carries a cost in terms of time or money. Overall, a majority of respondents did not engage in activities which require higher commitments of time or money, such as presenting oral testimony (3%), volunteering in a campaign (13%), meeting with legislators (17%), and contributing money to a candidate, campaign or party (36%).

There are likely to be relationships between resource variables and the performance of specific tasks. For instance, income would affect campaign contributions since one needs money in order to donate money. The current study did not explore these

relationships. This suggests the need for further analysis to determine whether variables such as income, hours worked, and number of children under 5 years, differentiate between respondents in performance of the specified tasks.

The current study found differences in the performance of similar political activities, contacting a government official by phone, fax, e-mail or letter (60%) and personally meeting with a government official (17%). However, these activities require different skills. In the first case, one should be able to communicate in letter or by telephone, to present one's argument. In the second case, in the process of dialogue, one may be asked to elaborate upon or justify one's assertions. Whereas social workers may feel comfortable in performing the first type of activity, they may not be as comfortable with the second.

Structured activities, including role-playing and observation, may provide social work students and practitioners an opportunity to develop a sense of competence and efficacy regarding meeting with government officials. Personal meetings occur between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. It is important that schools and employers are flexible, so that meetings can occur during these hours to reduce barriers to participation.

Americans have traditionally developed political skills through campaign activities, sanctioned by political parties (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Although the role of parties has declined, the development of political skills can be accomplished by schools, training centers, and membership organizations. For instance, the National Women's Political Caucus and the Institute for the Advancement of Political Social Work Practice regularly conduct campaign training programs.

They don't want to. The current study confirmed a relationship between interest in political activities and social workers' political participation. This suggests that political participation can be increased by increasing social workers' interest in political activities. Similarly, individuals will participate "when they get valuable benefits that are worth the cost of taking part" (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993, p. 10). The "costs" of participation may be explicit (e.g., money or time), but the benefits may not be as clear. It is important that social work students and practitioners are educated about the benefits that can accrue to the profession or to clients.

Although the current study found that social workers are politically active, most Americans are not active. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) suggested that participation in the 1990s has decreased in comparison to the 1960s due to the absence of a popular insurgency, such as the civil rights or anti-war movement of the 1960s. Cloward (1990) acknowledged that social workers' political participation was high in the 1960s due to the civil rights and welfare movements; in the 1980s, Cloward wrote, social workers became active in response to the policies of the Reagan administration.

In the current study, 88% of social workers were politically active; only 6% were inactive and 6% were very active. For purposes of comparison, although different measures of participation were used, only 42% of social workers were active at the start of the Reagan presidency, and 55% were active at the end (Ezell, 1993). Social workers' high level of activity in the current study may have been in response to implementation of federal welfare reform and advocacy for enhanced professional regulation of social work practice in New York.

No one asked. Individuals who are engaged in social networks, comprised of family, friends, and co-workers, have access to information and receive requests for participation (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Rosenstone and Hansen noted, however, that membership in networks does not make political participation **probable**. Members must be mobilized for political activity, either by an association or by candidates or elected officials working in partnership with the association.

The current study has confirmed that mobilization by a professional social work association results in higher levels of political activity by members. Professional associations may choose to expand mobilization networks to non-members, to increase participation in targeted activities.

Implications of this Research

The current study has identified those political tasks (e.g., voting, contacting government officials, and testifying) performed by certified social workers. It has also defined the role of resources, professional associations, and perceived efficacy for explaining respondents' political participation. In fulfilling these two goals, the study has identified the need for further research on social workers' political participation.

Effectiveness. The current study confirmed that social workers vote and contact legislators by phone or mail. However, it is not known if social workers' political participation is effective. Future research should examine the perceived effectiveness of social workers, not only as seen by legislators, but also in the legislative and political outcome. For instance, if social workers mobilize against a candidate effectiveness can be

measured by determining how many social workers voted in that race and whether the candidate was defeated. Similarly, if social workers take a position on a particular piece of legislation, was the outcome consistent with social workers' position? Mathews (1982) had suggested that social workers were not effective as Michigan legislators were not aware of social workers and ranked NASW as less effective than the United Auto Workers, American Medical Society, and other lobbying organizations.

Social Work Education and Field Practice. In the current study, respondents' political socialization did not affect political participation, contrary to the findings of Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995). It is possible that individuals socialized for political activity are drawn to the profession. This could be verified by surveying new students about their political socialization and political activity. The effect of social work education on political participation could be measured by surveying BSW and MSW students at the start and end of their academic programs to determine any changes in attitudes, efficacy, or participation.

On the basis of the current study's findings, and consistent with social learning theory, social work education and field placements could provide experiential activities related to political participation. Discussions of advocacy and strategies for organizational and political change should be incorporated in foundation and specialization courses. For instance, the increasing role of managed care in the delivery of social work services provides an opportunity to establish linkages between practice and policy. Students could be assigned to identify and develop strategies in the legislative and regulatory arenas to address perceived problems with managed care.

Similarly, field education could provide students with an opportunity to engage in hands-on political activities. The current study found that the most politically active social workers had a higher sense of political efficacy. Field instructors can develop assignments, based on real-world activities, to increase the students' sense of efficacy. For instance, most, if not all, agencies, engage in advocacy for increased government or private funding and additional services, authorized by local, state or national governments. Student field assignments could incorporate these activities, along with other activities related to political participation, such as meeting with government officials or organizing letter-writing campaigns or registering clients to vote.

Social work practice. The current study was limited to sampling only MSW practitioners, due to the licensing structure in New York. Future research could sample licensed social workers at the BSW, MSW and Clinical (advanced) level in another state, to determine whether there are differences on the basis of practice or type of license. On the basis of the current findings that political participation increases with time, one would predict that MSW practitioners are more active than BSW practitioners and that clinical practitioners, with the most years of experience, would be the most active social workers.

Conclusions

The current study has confirmed earlier studies that reported that more than 90 percent of social workers vote (Parker and Sherraden, 1991). The strongest predictors of social workers' political participation in the current study are related to efficacy. This

reinforces the need for social work educators and agencies to develop experiential activities to engage students and practitioners in the legislative and electoral processes.

Earlier studies of social workers' political participation sampled primarily members of NASW. The current study sampled MSW practitioners, who may or may not belong to a professional social work association, such as NASW. The findings confirmed that social workers, regardless of membership in professional associations, are politically active. Among politically active social workers, NASW members are the most active.

It is important for social work students and practitioners to develop relationships with government officials. A majority of respondents in the current study engaged in lower-cost activities, such as writing letters and voting but far fewer respondents engaged in higher-cost activities, such as testifying or meeting personally with government officials. Social workers can utilize higher-cost activities to develop relationships with government officials and to educate these officials about the social work profession and the needs of the social workers' clients thereby undoing the media "sound-bite" image of typical social work clients.

Political participation is integral to social workers' practice, regardless of setting, population served, or practice method (Jansson, 1994; Netting, Kettner, & McMurtry, 1993). Whatever the form of participation—voting, campaigning, or running for office—social workers can exercise their political voice. Social work education should reflect the importance of political participation by incorporating experiential political and legislative activities in all course content and as part of the field practicum.

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APPENDIX A

Cover letters sent with each mailing
1st Mailing: September 1, 1997
2nd Mailing: October 1, 1997
3rd Mailing: November 1, 1997

CU
wealth University
ICIAL WORK
SM
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NKLIN STREET
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INIA 23284-2027
1716
3-1120

September 1, 1997

I am writing to request your participation in a study of Certified Social Workers' political activity. Your name was chosen randomly from the roster of CSWs in New York State. Enclosed you will find a brief survey which asks questions about your political participation, your involvement with professional social work associations, and your social work education and practice experience. It should take less than 15 minutes to complete the survey. Your participation is voluntary but greatly appreciated.

The survey contains specific instructions for completing the survey and returning it. When you complete the survey, please tape or staple it closed so the postage-paid preaddressed shows and drop it in a U.S. mail box. All data will be aggregated so that no individual can be identified on the basis of his or her answers. In order to ensure anonymity, you are requested to return the enclosed postage-paid postcard separately. Reminders and follow-up mailings will only be sent to the those CSWs who do not return the postcard; if you do not wish to participate in the survey at all, please indicate this on the postcard and mail it to the researcher; you will not be contacted further.

This research fulfills the requirements of a dissertation for the doctorate in social work from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. The study has been approved by the VCU Committee on the Conduct of Human Research (Study 9605-4C). If you have any questions about your rights as a subject, you may contact the CCHR at [redacted] during business hours. If you wish to contact the researcher, I am available at [redacted], between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday; I can also be reached by e-mail sent to [redacted]. My mailing address is 188 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210.

Thank you in advance for your participation and prompt return of the completed survey.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

David Hamilton, CSW, ACSW

CU
nwealth University
ICIAL WORK
AM
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NKLIN STREET
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NIA 23284-2027
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-1120

October 1997

Dear Colleague:

In September, I wrote to request your participation in a study of Certified Social Workers' political activity. As of this date, I have not received the postcard indicating that you returned the completed survey. Enclosed you will find a replacement survey. It should take you less than 15 minutes to complete the survey and your answers will contribute to an understanding of the political activity of CSWs like yourself. I am sure that you have many demands on your time, but please take a few minutes now to complete the survey.

When you have completed the survey, staple or tape the survey closed and drop it in a U.S. mail box; no stamp is necessary. All data will be aggregated so that no individual can be identified on the basis of his or her answers. In order to ensure anonymity, you are requested to return the enclosed postage-paid postcard separately. Reminders and follow-up mailings will only be sent to the those CSWs who do not return the postcard; if you do not wish to participate in the survey at all, please indicate this on the postcard and mail it to the researcher; you will not be contacted further.

This research fulfills the requirements of a dissertation for the doctorate in social work from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. The study has been approved by the VCU Committee on the Conduct of Human Research (Study 9605-4C). If you have any questions about your rights as a subject, you may contact the CCHR at [redacted] during business hours. If you wish to contact the researcher, I am available at [redacted] between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday; I can also be reached by e-mail sent to [redacted]

Thank you in advance for your participation and prompt return of the completed survey.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

David Hamilton, CSW, ACSW

VCU
mmonwealth University

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FRANKLIN STREET
12027
/IRGINIA 23284-2027

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28-0716
828-1120

Dear Colleague:

I know that you have many demands on your time and that completing a survey may not rank high among your day-to-day responsibilities. However, I am writing with a final request for your participation in a study of Certified Social Workers' political activity.

In September and again in October I mailed you a cover letter, survey, and postage-paid response card, asking that you mail the card at the same time you return the completed survey. As of this date, I have not received the postcard indicating that you returned the completed survey. If you set aside the earlier mailings, I would respectfully request that you complete the survey today. If my records are incorrect, and you have previously returned the survey or postcard, or requested to be deleted from this project, I apologize for any miscommunication.

Enclosed you will find a replacement survey. It should take you less than 15 minutes to complete the survey. When you have completed the survey, tape the survey closed and drop it in a U.S. mail box; no stamp is necessary. All data will be aggregated so that no individual can be identified on the basis of his or her answers. In order to ensure anonymity, please mail the enclosed postage-paid postcard separately. These postcards allow me to track responses, without identifying a participant's survey.

There will be no more mailings regarding this survey. I hope that you will complete this survey so that I might complete this study of Certified Social Workers' political participation. If you choose not to complete the survey, I can only extend my hope that repeated mailings have not inconvenienced you greatly.

If you wish to contact me, please call [redacted] between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, or you can reach me by e-mail at [redacted]. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

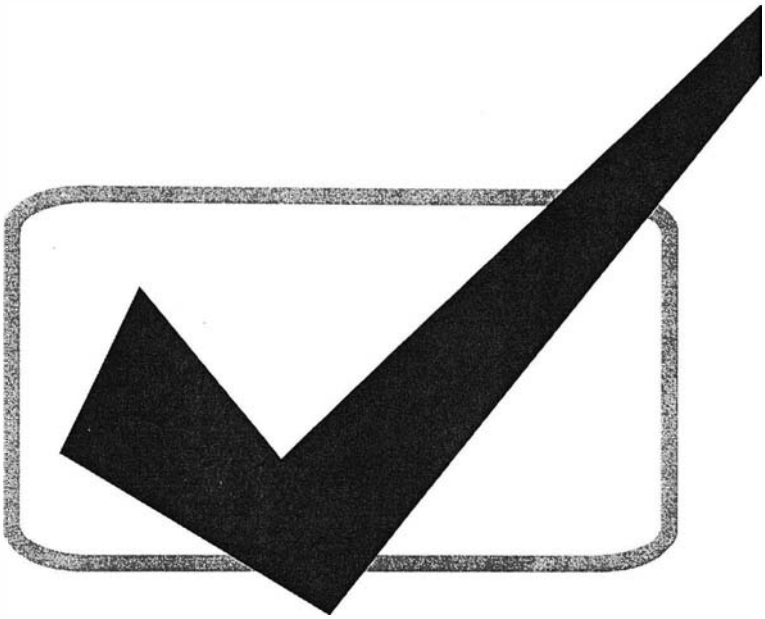
[redacted]

David Hamilton, CSW, ACSW

APPENDIX B

Survey Instrument

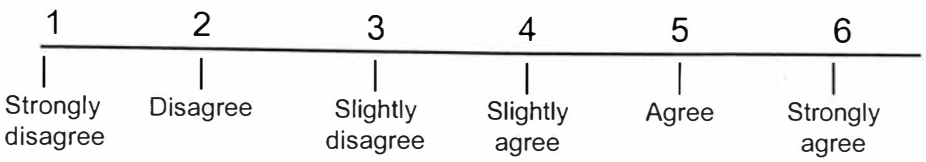
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF CERTIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS IN NEW YORK STATE



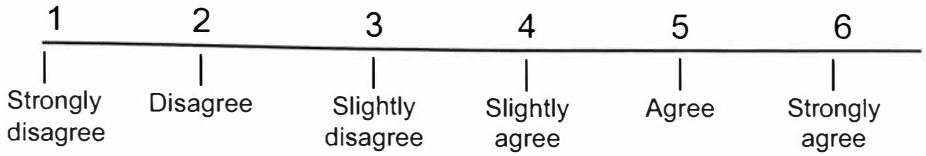
Study approved by the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Committee on the Conduct of Human Research (Study 9605-4C)

Direct Questions to
David Hamilton, CSW, ACSW
(518) 489-1640
Email: DavePhD2be@aol.com

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by writing the number of the scale response in the box to the left of the question.



	1.	There are plenty of ways for people like me to have a say in what our government does.
	2.	People like me are generally well qualified to participate in the political activity and decision making in our country.
	3.	I feel like I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues which confront our society.
	4.	I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much say in running government as possible.
	5.	I am often a leader in groups.
	6.	I can usually organize people to get things done.
	7.	I would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower.
	8.	Other people usually follow my ideas.
	9.	A good many elections are not important enough to bother with.
	10.	So many other people are active in local issues and organizations that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not.
	11.	It hardly makes any difference who I vote for because whoever gets elected does whatever he wants to anyway.



	12.	Most public officials would not listen to me no matter what I did.
	13.	Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on.
	14.	I like to wait and see if someone else is going to solve a problem so that I don't have to be bothered by it.
	15.	I would rather not try something I'm not good at.
	16.	I find it very hard to talk in front of a group.
	17.	I would rather someone else took over the leadership role when I'm involved in a group project.
	18.	My employer encourages workers to vote or contact elected officials.

For the following questions, check the best answer.

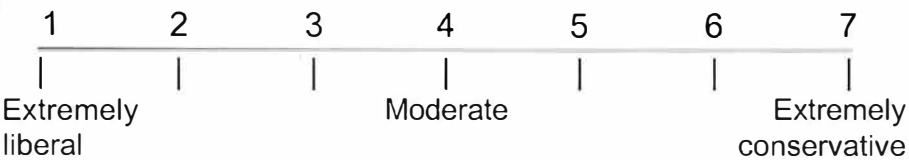
19.	How interested are you in politics and public affairs? __ Very interested __ Somewhat interested __ Slightly interested __ Not at all interested
20.	How often do you discuss politics or public affairs with family, friends, or colleagues? __ Every day __ Nearly every day __ Once or twice a week __ Less than once a week __ Never

21.	Think about the presidential elections since you were old enough to vote. Have you? (check best answer) __ Voted in all __ Voted in most __ Voted in some __ Rarely voted __ Never voted
22.	Did you vote in the 1996 presidential election, when the candidates were Bill Clinton and Bob Dole (check one): __ I voted __ I did not vote __ I do not recall
23.	Are you currently registered to vote at the address where you now live? __ Yes __ No
24.	When you were 16 years old, how frequent were political discussions at your house? __ Frequent __ Sometimes __ Almost never
25.	When you were 16 years old, how active was your mother in politics or in community affairs? (if you were raised by another female, please answer for that person) __ Very active __ Somewhat active __ Not active
26.	When you were 16 years old, how active was your father in politics or in community affairs? (if you were raised by another male, please answer for that person) __ Very active __ Somewhat active __ Not active

27. Please check the one term that best reflects your political affiliation:

__ Strong Democrat
__ Weak Democrat
__ Democratic leaner
__ Independent
__ Strong Republican
__ Weak Republican
__ Republican leaner
__ No affiliation

28. We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?



29. In the past two years at the suggestion of someone in a professional social work association (another member or someone in an official position) did you vote for or against certain candidates in an election for public office?

__ Yes __ No

30. In the past two years at the suggestion of someone in a professional social work association (another member or someone in an official position) did you take some other action (e.g., write a letter or contact a public official)?

__ Yes __ No

31.	In the past two years have you worked as a volunteer—that is, for no pay at all or for only a token amount—for a candidate running for elected office? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 34)
32.	If "yes", what office was the candidate seeking?
33.	How much do you see your own work in the campaign contributing to the candidate's success? __ A great deal __ Very little __ Somewhat
34.	In the past two years, did you contribute money to an individual candidate, a party group, a political action committee, or any other organization that supported candidates? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 37)
35.	If "yes", how much did you give in the last two years? $_____
36.	How much do you see your financial contribution contributing to the candidate's success? __ A great deal __ Very little __ Somewhat

37.	In the past two years, have you contacted by phone, letter, fax or e-mail a federal or state official or someone on his/her staff about problems or issues with which you were concerned? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 41)
38.	Did you get a response to your call or letter? __ Yes __ No
39.	Were you satisfied with the result? __ Yes __ No
40.	What was the subject of your call or letter?
41.	In the past two years, have you met in person with a federal or state official or someone on his/her staff, about problems or issues with which you were concerned? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 45)
42.	Did you get a response after the meeting? __ Yes __ No
43.	Were you satisfied with the result? __ Yes __ No
44.	What was the subject of your visit?

45.	In the past two years, have you taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration on some national or local issue (other than a strike against your employer)? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 47)
46.	Did the protest, march or demonstration: (check one only) __ Accomplish a lot __ Not accomplish much __ Accomplish a little __ Backfire
47.	In the past two years, have you presented oral testimony before a legislative body or committee? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 49)
48.	What was the subject of your testimony?

The following section collects background/demographic information about you and your social work practice. Please remember that your answers are anonymous and confidential. Please fill in the blank with the requested information or check the best answer.

49.	When were you born (month/year)?	
50.	What is your gender? __ Male __ Female	
51.	What is your ethnicity/race (check the one best answer)? __ American Indian __ Hispanic __ Asian/Pacific Islander __ White (not Hispanic) __ Black (not Hispanic) __ Other _____	

52.	What is your marital status? __ Single/never married __ Married __ Separated __ Domestic Partnership __ Divorced __ Widow/Widower	
53.	If married or in domestic partnership, is your spouse/partner currently (check one only)? __ Working full time __ Going to school __ Working part-time __ At home	
54.	How many children under the age of 5 years live with you? (Enter "0" if none)	
55.	Which answer best reflects your current employment status (Check one only)? __ Employed full-time __ Full-time student __ Employed part-time __ Searching for a job __ Retired __ Not working now	
56.	How many hours a week do you work? If you are in school and not working, how many hours a week are you in school?(whole numbers only)	
57.	What was your total family income in 1996?	$_____
58.	What is your major social work function in your primary place of employment? (check one only) __ Administration __ Teaching __ Clinical/Direct practice __ Training (agency) __ Community Organization __ Other (specify)____ __ Policy Analysis _____ __ Research	

59.	Which of the following BEST describes the setting of your primary employment? Check one only. __ Business/industry __ College/university __ Court/justice system __ Health-inpatient __ Health-outpatient __ Managed care __ Mental health-inpatient __ Mental health-outpatient __ Private practice-group __ Private practice-solo __ Residential facility __ School (pre-K to 12) __ Social service agency __ Public assistance/welfare __ Other (specify)_____
60.	Which of the following BEST describes your primary employer? __ Private for-profit __ Private not-for-profit __ Federal-Military __ Federal-Non-military __ State government __ Local government __ Self-employed
61.	What was your concentration method in the MSW program __ Micropractice __ Macropractice __ Generalist __ None
62.	In what year did you receive your MSW degree? 19____
63.	Beyond the MSW degree, have you earned another graduate degree? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 65)
64.	If yes, what degree and in what year did you earn it?

65.	Check the answer that best describes the highest educational level your father completed and got credit for? If you were raised by another male, please answer for that person. __ Grade School __ High school __ Associate's degree __ Bachelor's degree __ Master's degree __ Doctoral degree
66.	Check the answer that best describes the highest educational level your mother completed and got credit for? If you were raised by another female, please answer for that person. __ Grade School __ High school __ Associate's degree __ Bachelor's degree __ Master's degree __ Doctoral degree

The following questions collect information about your membership in professional social work associations. In the blank space to the left of each item, please write the number that best reflects your involvement with each social work association

1. Not a member
2. Member, but not active in affairs
3. Active in affairs of association (attend meetings)
4. Hold office in association or serve on committee(s)

	67.	National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
	68.	New York State Society for Clinical Social Workers (NYSSCSW)
	69.	NYS Social Work Education Association (NYSSWEA)
	70.	Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
	71.	National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW)
	72.	National Association of Hispanic & Puerto Rican Social Workers
	73.	Society for Social Work Administrators in Health Care
74.	Do you belong to other social work associations? __ Yes __ No (skip to Question 76)	
75.	If "yes", please list the other associations:	
76.	What is your home ZIP code?	

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Please staple or tape closed the completed survey so that the pre-paid address shows. Drop the survey in any U.S. mailbox.

Remember to mail separately the pre-addressed postage-paid postcard, indicating that you have completed and mailed the survey.

APPENDIX C

Regression Analyses

C-1. Direct entry regression includes all variables, explaining 37 percent of variation.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.350[a]	.123	.092	1.68	.123	4.049	5	145	.002
2	.424[b]	.180	.128	1.65	.058	2.480	4	141	.047
3	.541[c]	.293	.237	1.54	.112	11.034	2	139	.000
4	.611[d]	.373	.314	1.46	.081	8.839	2	137	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Mother's education, Father's education, Mother's activity, Father's activity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Mother's education, Father's education, Mother's activity, Father's activity, Family income 1996, Children under 5 years, Hours worked/in school, Years since MSW

c. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Mother's education, Father's education, Mother's activity, Father's activity, Family income 1996, Children under 5 years, Hours worked/in school, Years since MSW, Interest in political affairs, Sociopolitical Control Score

d. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Mother's education, Father's education, Mother's activity, Father's activity, Family income 1996, Children under 5 years, Hours worked/in school, Years since MSW, Interest in political affairs, Sociopolitical Control Score, Activity in NASW, Recruited by association

e. Dependent variable: Political Participation Score.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	Regression	57.203	5	11.441	4.049	.002[a]
	Residual	409.684	145	2.825		
	Total	466.887	150			
2	Regression	84.129	9	9.348	3.443	.001[b]
	Residual	382.758	141	2.715		
	Total	466.887	150			
3	Regression	136.571	11	12.413	5.225	.000[c]
	Residual	330.316	139	2.376		
	Total	466.887	150			
4	Regression	174.325	13	13.410	6.279	.000[d]
	Residual	292.563	137	2.135		
	Total	466.887	150			

C-2. Forward Regression uses Six Predictors to explain 35 percent of the variation.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.319[a]	.102	.096	1.68	.102	16.843	1	149	.000
2	.359[b]	.129	.117	1.66	.027	4.600	1	148	.034
3	.472[c]	.223	.207	1.57	.094	17.762	1	147	.000
4	.496[d]	.246	.225	1.55	.024	4.561	1	146	.034
5	.569[e]	.324	.301	1.48	.078	16.739	1	145	.000
6	.592[f]	.351	.323	1.45	.026	5.851	1	144	.017

a. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16
b. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Years since MSW
c. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Years since MSW, Sociopolitical Control Score
d. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Years since MSW, Sociopolitical Control Score, Interest in political affairs
e. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Years since MSW, Sociopolitical Control Score, Interest in political affairs, Recruited for association
f. Predictors: (Constant), Discussions at 16, Years since MSW, Sociopolitical Control Score, Interest in political affairs, Recruited for association, Activity in NASW
g. Dependent variable: Political Participation Score.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	Regression	47.418	1	47.418	16.843	.000[a]
	Residual	419.470	149	2.815		
	Total	466.887	150			
2	Regression	60.063	2	30.032	10.925	.000[b]
	Residual	406.824	148	2.749		
	Total	466.887	150			
3	Regression	103.921	3	34.640	14.029	.000[c]
	Residual	362.966	147	2.469		
	Total	466.887	150			
4	Regression	114.914	4	28.729	11.917	.000[d]
	Residual	351.970	146	2.411		
	Total	466.887	150			
5	Regression	151.343	5	30.269	13.909	.000[e]
	Residual	315.544	145	2.176		
	Total	466.887	150			
6	Regression	163.664	6	27.277	12.954	.000[f]
	Residual	303.226	144	2.106		
	Total	466.887	150			

Vita